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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Historic Boys.—Comprising : Marcus of Rome, The Boy Magistrate ; Brian of Munster, The Boy Chieftain ; Olaf of Norway, The Boy Viking ; William of Normandy, The Boy Knight ; Baldwin of Jerusalem, The Boy Crusader ; Frederick of Hohenstaufen, The Boy Emperor ; Harry of Monmouth, The Boy General ; Giovanni of Florence, The Boy Cardinal ; Ixtlil of Tezcucó, The Boy Cacique ; Louis of Bourbon, The Boy King ; Charles of Sweden, The Boy Conqueror ; Van Rensselaer of Rensselaer, The Boy Patroon. By E. S. Brooks. Octavo, illustrated . . . \$2 00

“ The character of the work is wholly praiseworthy. It is entertaining, nay more ; it is fascinating in its brilliant style, and impressive in the vivid realism surrounding the different persons who are written about.”—*Boston Post*.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, NEW YORK AND LONDON



Frontispiece.

(See page 220.)

CHIVALRIC DAYS

AND THE BOYS AND GIRLS WHO HELPED TO
MAKE THEM

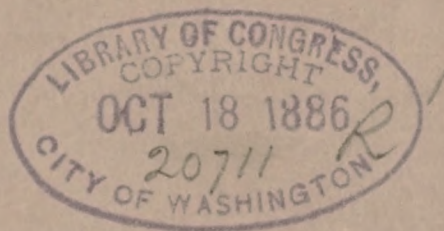
BY

Elbridge
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E. S. BROOKS

AUTHOR OF "HISTORIC BOYS"



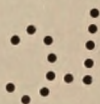
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PREFACE.

ALL days may be chivalric, however barren they may seem of opportunity for heroic action. For, as truth and honor, courtesy and gentleness, purity and faith can never grow old ; as valor and courage, kindliness of heart and knightliness of soul, are ever the highest orders of nobility ; so all days may be full of chivalry, all deeds may be instinct with that earnestness of purpose that lives in the heart of every well-regulated girl or boy.

In the belief that this earnestness of purpose has been a part of girl and boy nature from the earliest times, however it may have been dulled by unhelpful surroundings or marred by unchecked passions, the author of this volume seeks to present a few pictures in outline suggestive of certain historic scenes in which the girls and boys of the past have been central or subordinate figures. Few of these young people are models ; all of them are human. For boys have been boys and girls have been girls from the days of ancient Thebes to those of modern London and New York. In every age young hearts have throbbed with hopes and fears ; young lives have felt alike the joy of triumph and

the gloom of defeat. But from gloom, as from triumph, may come and have come a strength of purpose and a manliness of character that show in the gentleness of a life its true chivalry, and in its thoughtfulness for others the noblest and most helpful deeds. Not alone to the youth of his own knightly days but to the boys and girls of every age might be committed that definition of chivalry given by Sir Philip Sidney, the hero of Zutphen :

“ High erected thoughts seated in the heart of courtesy.”

Of the stories presented in this volume, three have already appeared in the pages of *St. Nicholas* magazine, viz.: “ The Story of the Field of the Cloth of Gold,” “ The Cloister of the Seven Gates,” and “ The Little Lord of the Manor.” One—“ The Captain of the Caravel”—has been freely adapted from the French of that most charming of historic-story tellers—Mme. Eugenie Foa, and based upon an excellent translation by Mrs. N. P. Harrison ; the remaining stories have been specially written for this volume.

Grateful acknowledgment is here made to the Century Co. and the editor of *St. Nicholas* for the use of certain cuts needed for the volume, as also to the Brooklyn Library for the freedom of its valuable reference collection.



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I.

CINDERELLA'S ANCESTOR.

(A Story of the Days of the Pharaoh.)

[B.C. 2500.]



MANY, many years ago—so many indeed, that it is difficult for the student of history to decide just where fiction ends and fact begins—there lived in ancient Pi-bast, the “City of the Sacred Cats,” a man whose name was Seb-u. Now Pi-bast, which you can find in your maps of Egypt under its later names of Bubastis or Tel-bast, was a very curious city. Its ruins may still be seen in that part of Northern Egypt known as the Delta of the Nile, about fifty miles north-east of the still more wonderful ruins of Memphis. In the centre of the city rose the heavy wall of the great temple to Pasht, the cat-faced goddess in whose honor the city was built. All around this central temple the fluted columns of the corridors ran in circle beyond circle; while, beyond the sacred groves and gardens of the temple, stretched the great city in every direction.

But the temples and corridors, the groves and gardens were by far the most pleasant portion of this singular city. For the houses in which the people lived were but poor-looking affairs compared with our comfortable homes of to-day. They were small one-story hovels, few of them containing more than one room, and built of sun-dried bricks or Nile mud. But, because this ancient city was so different from those of our day, you must not imagine that it was an unpleasant town to live in, or that the boys and girls who played around its mud houses, and walked in procession to its stately temple and through its sacred groves did not enjoy life quite as much as the boys and girls of to-day.

In fact, if we may believe the old records, although Egypt in those far distant days was full of sombre and gloomy manners and customs, this old, old town in the Nile Delta was about the jolliest spot in all Egypt. For it was built on purpose for the worship of the most attractive of the long list of the curious deities of ancient Egypt. This was Pasht, the goddess of light and fire, of song and music, of pleasure and social delights. She had the body of a woman and the head of a cat. Throughout all Egypt cats were thought to be under her special protection. When a pet cat died it was wrapped up like a mummy, according to the Egyptian custom, and sent to the temple of Pasht

to be buried, and in almost every Egyptian house could be found a little cat-headed image of this beloved goddess, made of clay or bronze.

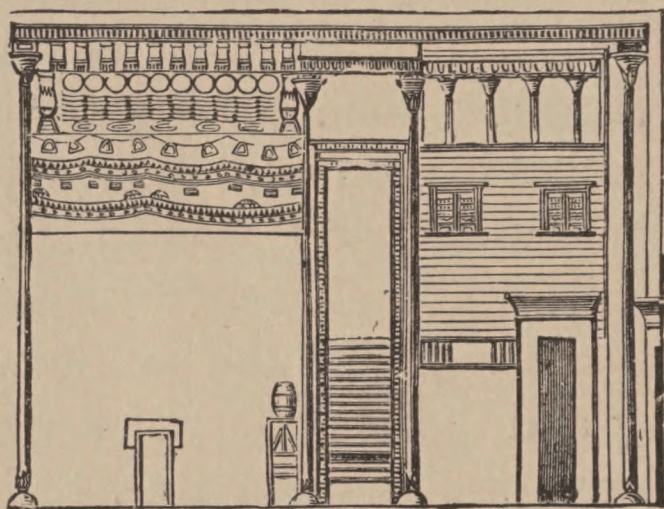
Now the manufacture of these images of the cat-goddess was the business of Seb-u. He lived in one of the mud houses not far from the entrance to the grove of the temple and near the great roadway, four hundred feet wide, that ran from the temple of Pasht to the river Nile.

At certain seasons of the year people from all part of Egypt would come floating down the Nile, in gayly decorated barges, with men playing on the flutes of lotus wood, and women clanging the wooden cymbals, while all the rest, men, women, and children, accompanied the music with hearty hand-clapping and the chanting of songs in honor of the goddess. Then when they had sailed up the canal to the landing at the foot of the Street of the Temple, they proceeded in joyful procession down the sloping roadway to the statued vestibule of the great shrine. At such time Seb-u was certain to do a large business in the sale of his bronze and clay images of the goddess Pasht to the worshippers who were thus thronging to her temple.

His house was larger and even better than most of the houses in Pi-bast. For Seb-u had been a thrifty and prosperous maker of images and was fairly well-to-do. His only daughter Nit, or as the

neighbors called her Nit-aker, "the perfect Nita," had been almost since her babyhood his companion and helper. But now Seb-u had married Nebt-hepet, the widow of Ari-bek, the armorer, and Nebt-hepet did not love Nita, but sought to turn Seb-u against his daughter, whom he had always loved so much.

Probably Nebt-hepet disliked Nita because of the fair face and light hair which the girl had in-



THE HOUSE OF SEB-U.

herited from her Libyan mother, and which this dark and swarthy step-mother from Southern Egypt could not endure.

So poor little Nita found her life a burden, a sad thing indeed for a gay-hearted maiden of thirteen. But girls mature much more rapidly in that warm southern country than in our colder northern land, and at thirteen Nita was really quite a young lady. The old hieroglyphics baked in sun-dried brick and

packed away for centuries in musty vaults have faithfully kept, through the ages, the record of the rare beauty of this young Egyptian girl, and tell of her exquisite face and form, her rosy cheeks, and her flowing auburn hair.

One day, near to the season of the great festival of Pasht, as the family of the image-maker were, according to an Egyptian custom, eating the evening meal just outside the open window of his shop, Seb-u said to his daughter :

“And whom, Nita, do you suppose the good priests of Pasht will select for the grove-girl at the feast?”

Now the grove-girl was usually the most beautiful or the most wealthy of all the maidens of Pi-bast, selected to sit upon a decorated throne in the midst of the sacred groves of Pasht and receive the homage of the gay revellers as the representative of the goddess of light and beauty. To be selected for such a post was of course esteemed as a high honor by all the girls of Pi-bast, and Nita's reply was therefore a very natural one.

“I know not, my father,” she said. “Would that the good fortune could be mine.”

“Thine indeed!” exclaimed her step-mother scornfully. “Thine indeed! As if the good priests would select such a pink-faced doll as thou to sit enthroned in honor of the glorious black-haired

goddess. It is more like to be the daughter of the Lord Khu-a, the treasurer, or, perchance the beautiful Ha-shop, with the black eyes and the hair like



“THE DAUGHTER OF LORD KHU-A.”

night, much more like to the great goddess than such as thou.”

“So, so, good Nebt-hepet,” said Seb-u, anxious to avoid a scene, and yet quite as anxious to defend



"IN THE TEMPLE OF PASHT."
(From a picture by A. Calbet.)

his fair young daughter, "fret not thyself over our child's face, so like to her beautiful mother's—"

"Beautiful, say'st thou!" broke out the angry Nebt-hepet, springing up from her leopard-covered camp-chair in such a rage as to send both the small bronze tea-table and her own good husband sprawling on the ground. "Wilt thou never have done prating of that washed-out Libyan woman, with hair of tow and eyes of faded blue? Thou art a fool with thy talk of her beauty and of this lazy one's chances for the grove-girl's throne, when thou dost know that she is no more like to sit thereon than is the crocodile of Sa-vak to dance in the sacred grove with the beetle of Ptah."

"But nevertheless," said Seb-u, quietly, as he picked himself from the ground with the help of Nita and bade the slave gather up the scattered dishes, "but nevertheless, good Nebt-hepet, thou art likely to be wrong, for A-up-eth, the priest, did tell me this day, when he took from me the silver Pasht whose nose I had repaired, that the priests were decided to desire our Nita of us as the grove girl at the feast."

And so indeed it proved. For even before little Nita had fully recovered from her joyful surprise and the jealous Nebt-hepet from her torrent of angry words, there came to the image-maker's shop two priests from the great temple and a throng of

gay young devotees requesting him to give to them his daughter Nita to sit at the feast on the grove-girl's throne in the sacred grove of Pasht.

The time of the festival arrived. The gay barges with crowds of musicians and singers and a curious freight of fruits and flowers and mummied cats floated down the river and through the broad canals to the landing-place before the temple. For days crowds upon crowds of pilgrims, by thousands and tens of thousands, thronged the broad paved roadway, jostled one another in the brilliant corridors, bowed in worship before the great bronze image of the goddess, and danced and sang and feasted in the sacred groves of Pasht.

And in the midst of the great grove, upon her gayly decorated throne sat the royal grove-girl of the festival, Nita the daughter of Seb-u, the image-maker. The fairest youths and maidens of the great city gathered around her as her attendants and chanted hymns to Pasht, while the throng of pilgrims, passing and repassing, praised the grove-girl's beauty and laid their offerings at her feet.

Nita was dressed in a long robe of crimson interwoven with patterns in gold ; around her waist was a broad purple sash decorated with silver figures of the goddess Pasht, a wreath of lotus leaves encircled her fair head, while her pretty feet were encased in sandals of bronzed leather, decorated with

silver cat-heads and trimmed with fur. And it is because of these beautiful sandals that this story of "the perfect Nita" has come down, through all the centuries to us.

One day, almost the last in this season of festival, as Nita sat in the centre of her throng of attendants, the "toe piece" of her sandal became loosened and the shoe slipped to the ground. At once three of the attendants sprang to pick it up, and a friendly rivalry for its possession ensued. Then one of the three, Kam-on, the chief huntsman of the temple, wishing to show his skill at juggling and ball-tossing, flung the sandal high in air, intending to catch the pretty thing as it fell, holding one hand above his back.

But alas for Kam-on's intentions. For, as the bronzed sandal went whirling through the air, a great black eagle circling aloft on the watch for prey, caught the gleam of the whirling slipper, and supposing it to be some choice and most appetizing bird, swooped down upon it, caught it in his strong talons, and sailing majestically off through the clear Egyptian air, bore the dainty slipper far away from the sacred groves of Pasht.

But oh, what a wail went up from the grove-girl's startled attendants as they saw the slipper disappearing from their sight ; and oh, what a scolding poor Nita received from her angry step-mother

when she came home that night with one dainty sandal of bronze leather, silver, and fur, and one old and soiled sandal of twisted papyrus and palm !

In the royal palace at Memphis sat the young Pharaoh Nebi, the “divine lord,” the “victorious and ever-living He,” king of the two Egypts, and known in history by his throne name of Nofer-ka-ra, “the splendid brother of the great god of the sun.”

But for all his splendor and greatness the young King Nebi was not entirely happy. He was bored and tired, and longed for a change. For it is possible, boys and girls, even for those who have every desire gratified and every wish fulfilled, to feel bored by too much indulgence. The young Pharaoh Nebi, king in the mighty city of Memphis, longed for something—he knew not what.

And it was a mighty city. With walls seventeen miles in circuit, stretching from the splendid harbor on the Nile to the border of the western desert, a day's journey from wall to wall ; with temples and gardens and palaces beautiful to see ; with monuments of marble and alabaster ; with granite walls and citadels, and a population of over half a million souls—such four thousand years ago was Men-nofer, “the good place,” known to us under the later Greek name of Memphis.

And here in the open court-yard of his royal palace, overlooking the mighty city from the "white wall" to the distant pyramids, sat the young Pharaoh Nebi, "the brother of the sun." And as he sat thus, heedless of the words of his councillors and the reports of his household officers, suddenly there dropped into his lap, even into the folds of his kingly robe, something small and hard. With an exclamation of surprise the young king started from his revery, and looking up into the clear sky, he saw sailing majestically toward the desert a great African eagle. Then the Erpa and the Ha, the Set and the Semner-nat, the Mur and the Sehat, the Ur and Emkhet—all high officers of state—looked troubled and surprised. The high-steward of the household bade the chief master of the singers to direct the bailiff of the wardrobe to ask the overseer of the bath to request the steward of the royal hair and nails to commission the teacher of mysteries to remove this heaven-sent omen from the royal robe and announce its meaning. But even before this round-about order had gone half through its necessary amount of "red tape" the young Pharaoh had himself thrust his own royal hand into the folds of the royal robe and drawn out—a little sandal of bronzed leather, stamped in silver and trimmed with fur.

"Now, by the wig of Tum," cried the young



"HE SAT HEEDLESS OF THEIR WORDS."

monarch, looking at this strange gift of the eagle in delighted surprise, "but this is wondrous fair. To whom, think ye, my honored ones, doth this sandal belong, and what doth it bode to the realm?"

Then Erpa and Ur, and Set, and Semner-nat, and all the other officers around the throne tried to appear wise, but only looked puzzled.

At length the teacher of mysteries said :

" 'T is an omen from the evil gods, O king, I fear. For the eagle is sacred to none of the gods of Kem,* and a messenger, not sacred, could bring naught but an evil omen to the brother of the sun. Touch it not, O king ; it is *bes* ! " †

"Not so," said the king, decidedly ; "this can be no evil omen. It hath been worn and by a most fair and dainty foot. No maiden of Memphis hath foot fitted for such a shoe, and she who can wear so small and fair a creation must be wondrous fair herself. You have wished me, my honored ones, to take unto myself a queen. Hear, then, my words. Only she who hath the mate of this dainty sandal, and can wear them both, shall share my throne. Find me the owner of this little shoe, and you do find the wife and consort of your Pharaoh."

At this there was general consternation among the officers of state. Was King Nebi mad?

* Kem, the Black Land, the Egyptian name of Egypt.

† Uncanny, unlucky.

From the teacher of mysteries to the steward of the royal finger-nails ran a shudder of apprehension. Suppose this fair unknown should be of no official family—suppose she were one of the “mob,” as the common people were called. But none dared to protest openly. Young Nebi was resolved, and none among them was so rash as to tamper with the will of a Pharaoh.

“Test we the oracle, my honored ones,” he said. “If that the sacred bull, the divine Apis, doth give his sanction to my desire, then would I find and wed the owner of this sandal. I have spoken.”

That very day, in solemn and splendid procession, the king and his attendants sought the abode of the sacred bull, Apis, in the magnificent temple of Ptah. With children leading the way, crowned with flowers and singing hymns to Apis, with guards bearing the royal signals, and nobles with the sacred oil, the king walked to the splendid temple, and when the lamps and the incense upon the altar had been lighted, and an offering of gold had been laid thereon, the king himself, approaching the sacred stall, held out the mysterious sandal to the Apis—a beautiful Egyptian bull, with the mystic markings in black and white. His sacred bullship first sniffed at the proffered sandal and then, opening his sacred lips, he licked the little shoe with his sacred tongue. The oracle was propi-

tious. At once, "with a divine impulse," says the record, "the boys who stood about the sacred stall poured out the prediction in perfect rhythm." And in the midst of this hymn of rejoicing the young King Nebi spread out his offering of much gold upon the altar of Ptah, and went away joyful and delighted, for he had set his heart upon a gracious answer.

And now throughout the kingdom, north and south, east and west, went the swift messengers of the Pharaoh seeking the maiden who possessed the mate to the sandal of bronzed leather, stamped in silver and trimmed with fur.

Of course you can imagine the rest. It is fairy story, but it is history none the less. The messengers of the king came to the city of Pi-bast. They sought out the Lord Hap-u, the governor of the city, and the priests of the temple of Pasht. And the Lord Hap-u and the priests could tell them all they desired to know. The story of the grove-girl, the eagle, and the lost sandal matched precisely the story of the king, the eagle, and the sandal dropped from the clouds. There could be no doubt about it; the bride of "his Holiness, Nofer-ka-ra, the king," was to be found in sacred Pi-bast, and the messengers of the Pharaoh hastened to the house of Seb-u, the image-maker.

If it had not been that she was a fast-bound and loyal wife, Nebt-hepet herself would have tried very hard to squeeze her fat foot into that little sandal. But it was of no use. Good fortune was on the side of Nita, her step-daughter ; the trim little foot fitted the dainty sandal exactly ; the mate to it was produced and worn, and in less than a month, with feasting and flowers and song and the usual amount of display that attended the marriage ceremony of an Egyptian and a king, Nita, the daughter of Seb-u, the image-maker, was married to Nebi Nofer-ka-ra, and became therewith Nit-aker, queen of Egypt.

And now I wish that I could close this story with the usual joyful announcement : “ So they were married and lived happily ever after.” But at this point, alas, history and fairy story part company. For after King Nebi had ruled at Memphis for six years with Nita as his queen, the Mur and the Erpa, the Ha and the Emkhet, and the other high officers of state, who had never recovered from the slight put upon their order when the Pharaoh Nebi selected a wife from among the “ mob,” conspired against the poor king and murdered him.

Then Nitocris, the queen,—for this is the Greek and therefore the historical name of the Egyptian Nit-aker,—was raised to the throne of the two Egypts as queen supreme. She mourned for her murdered husband, but in secret, for she was con-

templating a deep and fearful revenge upon his assassins. In those days, long, long before the light of Christianity and the Golden Rule had come upon the earth, men and women knew but one force—the force of Might, and but one law—the law of Revenge, and Queen Nitocris, beautiful and high-minded though she was, had been schooled in this faith and knew no other.

So when the “splendid brother of the great god of the sun,” the “ever-living and victorious He,” had been wrapped in the mummy-cloths and laid away in the pyramid he had prepared as his tomb, Nitocris, the queen, following the custom of the Egyptian monarchs, set about preparing a pyramid for her own memorial.

To the north and west of the old city of Memphis, on the very edge of the great Libyan desert, may be seen the pyramids—those vast masses of hewn stone and masonry that for forty centuries have stood as the records of an ancient world. Near to the pyramid of Cheops, the giant of the pyramids, and to the other and scarcely less gigantic one of Chefren, to the north of Memphis, there stood in the days of Queen Nitocris an unfinished pyramid, known then as Kha-nofer, “the beautiful rising,” hewn out of the hard granite in the quarries of Assouan, and commenced years before as the memorial of one of the royal ancestors of King Nebi, the Pharaoh Mer-en-ra the Pious.

This pyramid Queen Nitocris determined to finish as her own monument, and at once the laboring classes of Memphis and the country round about had plenty of work to do—quarrying, transporting, hoisting, setting, and securing the great blocks of granite and the polished limestone slabs. This doubled the original pyramid of King Meren-ra, and gave it the costly ornamental casing of polished granite which has made this monument of Queen Nitocris, covering a space of more than two acres, the most beautiful of all the pyramids.

But beneath the pyramid the queen ordered her architect to construct a great subterranean chamber, and while this was being done she commanded also the secret construction of a sluice-way, or aqueduct connecting this underground chamber with the high-water mark of the Nile.

Once each year, in the latter part of the month of September, the great river rises fully thirty feet above low-water mark, inundating the land, and leaving, as it recedes, its deposit of rich and fertilizing mud. It is a joyous season in Egypt, for this overflow of the Nile means fruitful crops and an abundant harvest.

It was the Feast of the Inundation in the sixth year of the reign of Queen Nitocris. Erpa and Ha and Set and Semner-nat and all the high officers of her state who were known or suspected to have been concerned in the assassination of King

Nebi were invited to celebrate the feast in the great subterranean chamber under Kha-nofer, the beautiful pyramid of Queen Nitocris. In glittering procession, dressed in gorgeous robes, the guests of the queen traversed the broad roadway that led from the gates of Memphis to the entrance to the pyramid. In the underground chamber lights flashed on tables gleaming with splendid dishes filled with all the dainties that the Egyptian lords loved at their feasts. The wines of Mareotis and of Tenia sparkled in bronze and golden drinking cups, while all the guests praised the wisdom, the beauty, and the generosity of Nitocris their queen. The feast "ran long and high," and in the midst of the rejoicing the queen and her women withdrew; she appeared at the entrance of the pyramid; at a given signal the great door closed noiselessly; a secret floodgate was lifted; there came a rush "as of mighty waters," and of all that company of revellers not one was ever seen again. Waiting workmen carefully sealed the great door to the chamber, and to this day no man can tell where it is.

Then Queen Nitocris repaired to her royal palace in Memphis, and all in her queenly robes flung herself down upon a heap of smouldering ashes from which arose the fumes of a poisonous gas. And thus she died.

So the sixth dynasty of the kings of Egypt



THE QUEEN NITOCRIS.
(From an old relief.)

ended with the suicide of a relentless queen and a loyal wife. Her pyramid became her tomb, and a broken piece of a gilded sarcophagus and the mummied fragment of a woman's hand are the only reminders discovered in the polished pyramid of that beautiful queen of four thousand years ago, whose remarkable story is still to be traced in curious hieroglyphics on the papyrus roll of the annals of the priests, now to be seen in the museum at Turin.

But the story of the mysterious slipper and the heap of ashes lives in the folk-lore of every land, and we to-day, studying the childish legends in the light of historic facts, can read in the romantic and tragic history of the beautiful Nitocris, queen of Egypt, our own immortal fairy story of the peerless Cinderella.





II.

THE FAVORED OF BAAL.

(A Story of the Great African Republic.)

[B.C. 238.]



HERE was once upon a time a rocky headland jutting out into an azure sea. To-day headland and sea still feel the glory and fervor of the warm southern sun, but only a waste of rock and sand and the mean houses of a little Moorish town mark the spot where, centuries ago, from the water's edge southward to the Libyan hills rose the walls and towers, the temples and palaces, the groves and gardens of a mighty city.

Look upon your map of Africa for the country of modern Tunis on the northern shore of the great southern continent. Northeast of the city of Tunis you will see a promontory running out into the Mediterranean, terminating in the cape called Bon. In the broad sweep of the bay running westward around to Cape Farina and now called the Gulf of Tunis, another promontory,

about six miles northeast from the modern city of Tunis, ran out into the sea. This was the site of ancient Carthage, one of the noblest cities of the long ago, founded nearly a thousand years before the Christian era by Dido Elissa,—the runaway Phœnician queen, whose romantic story you will some day read in Virgil's great poem of the *Æneid*. Peopled thus by the Phœnicians, those adventurers, sailors, explorers, and merchants of the ancient world, Carthage soon grew to be a rich and prosperous city. It had possessions and colonies all along the northern coast of Africa, in Sicily and Sardinia, in Spain and the Balearic Islands. Its galleys, rowed by well-trained oarsmen, had borne its gold and its merchandise into every Mediterranean port, and carried its great bronze standard of the Horse and the Palm-tree through the Straits of Gibraltar northward into the then unknown regions of France, of England, and of Ireland, and far southward along the unhealthy and tropical coasts of Western Africa.

And, as to the city itself, even Grecian jealousy and Roman hate have not been able entirely to blot out the records of its glory and grandeur. From its sculptured sea-gate on the Mediterranean, and its magnificent colonnade of pillared docks, the splendid city stretched up the height, its streets running at right angles, and lined with shops and palaces and massive six-story houses, until it reached the land-



THE MERCHANTS OF CARTHAGE ATTACKED BY ROMANS.

ward ramparts and the triple walls, in which were stabled the three hundred war elephants and the four thousand horses of the city's garrison.

And this splendid city of merchant princes was, itself, the capital of a great republic, with a constitution and a government in many ways similar to those of our own home-land of America. It had a house of representatives of three hundred members, a senate of thirty, and two presidents, or "suffetes," duly elected to their official positions. In the broad and beautiful forum, or market-place, stood the senate-house, where, as in our own capitol at Washington, the law-makers met to frame laws, make treaties, and decide important questions of state. From the forum northward to the hill of Byrsa, or the Acropolis, ran the Via Salutaris or Street of Health, leading to the splendid temple of Æsculapius, where, in secret council the senate and the presidents debated over grave and important matters.

At the date of our story, just two hundred and thirty-eight years before Christ, the two presidents were the Lord Hanno, the general of the army, and the Lord Hamilcar, the admiral of the fleets. The Lord Hanno was the representative of the aristocracy or rich men of Carthage, while the admiral Hamilcar was the representative of the democracy or people of the republic.

Both the presidents, however, were very rich ; for the spoils of war and conquest had brought them great store of treasure, and the palace of the Lord Hamilcar Barca, the admiral, in the cypress-shaded garden of his great estate, just outside the city, was splendidly built and richly furnished. His name, Hamilcar, meant the favorite of Hercules, and the additional title of Barca meant the lightning, so that his whole name signified "the favorite of Hercules, terrible as the lightning."

From all this you will infer, and rightly, that the Lord Hamilcar Barca, was a very fiery and very successful soldier ; and this opinion was likewise held by the people and the armies of Carthage, by the Romans who had many a time felt his power, and especially by the great admiral's dearly loved son, the little ten-year-old Hannibal.

At the time of our story the Lord Hamilcar Barca had just successfully conquered a terrible rebellion against the power of Carthage, brought about by the swarm of dissatisfied and underpaid foreign soldiery it had in its service. And because he had saved the republic from a fearful danger and from civil war, he was especially honored and made the head of the republic. Little Hannibal did not understand the reason for all this, but he knew that the streets of the great city rang with shouts and acclamations whenever the golden

chariot of his father, drawn by four Numidian horses and surrounded by an escort of the "sacred band" gorgeous in golden armor, rolled through the forum or up the Street of Health, and he felt that it was a fine thing to be the son of so great a man. For boys have loved the feeling of power and prominence in every age of the world's history, and have made the most of their fathers' glories and honors.

And to-day as the boy stood in the glittering chariot by the side of his father the Admiral-President, holding the ends of the silken reins that hung from the driver's hands, one from among the shouting throng had thrown a wreath of olive leaves over the boy's curly head, and all the people had clapped their hands in approval, and had shouted : " Barca, Barca ! He is the son of Barca ! Hanna-Baal ; Hanna-Baal ! "

Now Baal was the great deity of the Phœnicians and the chief of all the gods of the Carthaginians, and Hanna-Baal, which was the name of this ten-year-old son of the admiral, meant the favored or favorite of the great god Baal. What wonder then that little Hannibal felt very proud and happy as he received all this attention and homage from that shouting throng.

In the spreading shade of the thick cypress trees in the gardens of Megara—that beautiful suburb



THE YOUNG HANNIBAL.

of Carthage in which stood the palace of Hamilcar—a little slave girl, whose fair face and golden hair proclaimed her to be one of the Gallic captives from across the sea, was playing with a small spotted guepard—the chetah or tamed tiger-cat which the old-time hunters of the East trained for the chase.

The guepard, of course, did not belong to the little Gallic slave girl. The bond-servants of the Carthaginians had but few pleasures and fewer pets. Like all the slaves of those old days, they were ground down by hard work and still harder taskmasters. But Hamilcar Barca was a kind and lenient lord, and the throng of slaves upon his great estate were better cared for and more justly treated than the majority of their comrades. Still the little Gyptis knew that it was not right for her to unloose and play with her young lord's pet tiger-cat. Child-like, though, she enjoyed the sport all the more because it was a forbidden pleasure. Why is it that things we ought not to do seem so much more attractive and fascinating than those we know we can do?

A long trumpet peal rang out on the sultry air. The narrow gateway was flung hastily open, and into the gardens dashed the chariot of the admiral. Little Hannibal sprang lightly to the ground, but as he saw the little slave girl trying to hide from his sight his spotted guepard, he ran toward her

with an angry word, and raised his hand to strike. But the voice of his father withheld him.

“Stop, my son,” said the admiral-president. “He who is the Favored of Baal should not lift hand against a slave. It is a craven dog that doth devour the herds it should protect.”

The bright little fellow understood his father’s meaning, and with a flushed face he lowered his uplifted hand. Instead of striking the crouching slave girl he cast around the leopard’s neck the flower-chain of roses and pomegranates that the girl had woven, and together, boy and girl, master and slave, raced gayly away with the tiger-cat still deeper into the sunlit gardens.

The manner of the trained guepard was much like that of the domestic dog or cat, and the three playmates were soon having a glorious romp under the cypress trees, for boys and girls could play at jolly games in those old days, quite as heartily as they can to-day. But suddenly, as they rolled in a tangled heap at the foot of a giant cork-tree, there came a rush of wings, and a mighty bird—one of the strongest and fiercest of the species known as the lammergeyer, or bearded vulture—swooped down and twined its strong talons in the flimsy, veil-like tunic of the Gallic slave girl. The guepard, surprised and startled by the descent of the great bird, slunk frightened away; the girl

screamed in terror ; but young Hannibal, tearing off his short purple mantle, threw it over the bird's white head, and then valiantly flinging his arms about its body strove to tear it away from the struggling girl. The vulture, thus blinded and attacked, beat about with its mighty wings, while endeavoring at the same time to release its enveloped head and its entangled talons. But though bruised and buffeted by the vulture's wings, young Hannibal manfully held his ground, and as the bird's feet became free from the meshes of poor Gyptis' veil, "the dauntless boy," so the record says, "seized the great bird more firmly in his clutch and pressed it against his chest," actually strangling the vulture in his strong and sinewy grasp.

There was a cry of delight from the avenue of palm-trees, and as boy and bird fell to the ground, the one exhausted and the other dead, the Admiral Hamilcar came into the cork-tree's shade and saying, proudly, "So, son of Hercules, there spake the blood of heroes," he caught the boy in his arms and praised and petted him.

"He who defends the weak and dares attack the fierce," he said, "is worthy to stand within the war-chariot and face the charge of the elephants. My Hannibal will yet prove his valor as a son of Mago."*

* Mago was the father of Queen Dido, the founder of Carthage, and was the ancestor to whom the family of Hannibal traced their descent.

Then, taking the boy, though still so young, into his confidence as they sat upon the northern terrace of the palace and looked out upon the blue Mediterranean and toward the Italian coast, the admiral told his son of the might and power of Carthage, of the bitter enemies of the great republic who in distant Rome prayed and plotted for its downfall, and how it was for all true sons of Carthage to be loyal and strong in her honor and defence. He told how even now, the great city was becoming weakened and nerveless because its citizens knew but one desire, that of gain and gold, instead of striving for the strengthening and glory of the republic; and he told him also that the time must surely come when the power of envious and relentless Rome would once again be hurled against the splendid city in deadly conflict, either to destroy or be destroyed.

“He who can stay his hand from striking a helpless slave and yet can crush the vulture in his strong young arms; he who can hold the tiger-cat in leash and guide his father’s war-steeds while yet a boy like you,” thus spoke the loving admiral, “is one whom the republic may hope either to exalt in honor or to mourn gloriously.”

That very night, in secret council within the temple of Æsculapius, the senate of Carthage decided to strike a blow at Roman supremacy by extending

the power of Carthage in the rich peninsula of Spain, and the Lord Hamilcar Barca, the admiral, was invested with the sole command of the armies and the fleets. Remembrance of Roman greed and cruelty and dread of Rome's increasing power urged the brave admiral to accept, and this he did, only stipulating that the Lord Hasdrubal, whom the people of Carthage greatly loved, should be his second in command, and that men and means in plenty should be given him for the work of conquest.

The wonderful gardens of Hamilcar's palace lay bathed in all the glory of the mid-winter month of Schebaz, the most perfect season in the Carthaginian year. The pomegranate trees were brilliant with their crimson flowers, while rose and fig-tree, cypress and sycamore, gave varied color to the brilliant scene. The terraced palace of spotted Numidian marble, four stories in height, glittered in the sun as down the broad stairway came the admiral-president to enter his gorgeous chariot. The noble Carthaginian was a tall and superbly built man of about thirty years. His splendid tunic of the violet silk of Tyre glittered with its golden brocade of vines and grapes, boots of gilded leather covered his feet, a collar of gems encircled his neck, large pearl pendants hung from his ears, a golden helmet covered his head, and his short bronzed battle-sword

hung at his side. The old Carthaginians had the real African love of display and of brilliant colors and ornaments.

The Admiral Hamilcar waited for the restive chariot horses to calm their prancing and curvetting, and, just as he was about to spring into his chariot, down the broad stairway like a rush of flame flashed the red mantle of the little Hannibal.

"Let me too ride in the chariot with you, my father," he cried, "and bid Iddibal give me the reins, that I may guide the horses through the Street of Health."

Hamilcar lifted the boy until young Hannibal's curly head rested upon his father's helmet-crest.

"Nay, not at this hour, my boy," he said, "for this is scarce a day for lads to trifle with affairs of state. This morning, my Hannibal, I seek the shrine of Hercules and the temple of the mighty Baal to crave the favor of the great gods upon my work in Spain."

At once the boy flung his arms about his father's neck, regardless of the gemmed collar and the violet tunic.

"Oh, then, my father," he cried, "let me too go with you. Did you not tell me that a son of the republic should gladly give himself up to its honor and defence? And what am I, my father, but a son of Carthage?"

Hamilcar smoothed the restless young head and said gravely : " Alas, my boy, little can you know the full meaning of your words. I go to the temple to pledge my strength and life against the power of relentless Rome."

" Aye, but let me too go, my father," persisted young Hannibal with eager voice. " Let me too touch the victims and stand by your side at the altar. See"—and unclasping his encircling arms, he raised one brown and sturdy little fist aloft and shook it with vindictive energy—"see, my father ; I, too, hate Rome !"

In an age when the test of courage was hatred rather than forgiveness, centuries before the "eye for an eye" of Judea and of Rome had given place to the divine " Love your enemies " of the Sermon on the Mount, such a burst of passion as was this of young Hannibal's was the surest way to a war-like father's heart.

" My noble boy," cried Hamilcar with the deepest emotion, " I do believe that you do mean all your fiery words. Great Hercules, my patron, did, even in his cradle, strangle the two mighty serpents sent for his destruction, and who can say that this son of mine, even though but a boy, may not do some mighty deed for Carthage and for Baal? Will you go with your father to Spain and to glory, my Hannibal?"

Go? would he not indeed? What boy of any spirit would say no to such a question, whatever his name and nation?

And as young Hannibal sprang to his father's side and took the chariot reins from Iddibal the driver, it would be hard to decide which was the proudest of the three—the manly little boy so full of energy and ambition, the noble admiral his father, or grim old Iddibal the charioteer, who had himself trained the eye and hand of this brave little lad to be free and fearless, steady and strong.

So they rode on to the city, under the arches of the aqueduct, through the cheering streets and the crowded forum until, at last, turning into the Street of Baal, they dashed up the height upon the crest of which stood the great temple of Baal Hammon, the supreme sun-god of the ancient Phœnicians and their descendants, the people of Carthage.

It was a noble edifice, a great vaulted and circular building two hundred feet across, its solid masonry rising high in air and surmounted with a triple dome. It was richly carved and decorated, and its twelve gates looked out over the mighty city, the rolling African plains, and the sparkling waters of the Mediterranean. Even Roman hate and destruction could not entirely obliterate it, and to-day the ruined pedestals of its twelve massive,

fluted columns may still be seen lifting themselves above that waste of African sand and rock.

In the centre of this circular temple stood the great brazen image of Baal—the god to whose worship the faithless Hebrews so often turned in the ancient days, the one whose priests the grand old prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, put to shame on the slopes of Mount Carmel, and whose magnificent altar the wicked Phœnician princess, Jezebel, of Tyre, reared in the very court of Ahab, King of Israel.

His rites were bloody and cruel, fit type of what, even in a beautiful and cultured city, may be done under the dark and vindictive faiths of Paganism. A noble war-horse, one of the fleetest and choicest of Hamilcar's stables,* lay bound upon the great altar, and as the knife of the priest let out the life-blood of the noble animal, Hamilcar the admiral placed one hand upon the victim and raising the other aloft toward the hideous brazen image with its head of an ox and its outstretched, open hands, he craved the favor of Baal, "Lord of heaven and god of time," to favor his new efforts for the good and glory of Carthage.

"Then," says Polybius, the old Greek historian, "when the libations and other rites were ended, Hamilcar, having commanded the rest that were

* Horses were offered as sacrifices to Baal, under the belief that the swiftest of animals would be an acceptable offering to the swiftest of immortal beings.



HANNIBAL BEFORE THE ALTAR.

about the altar to retire, called Hannibal to him and caressed him."

"My Hannibal," he said, "and do you still desire to go with me to the army and to Spain?"

Even the sombre surroundings of that great temple of the ox-headed idol could not dampen the boy's ardor or chill his hope of glory.

"I have said it, my father," he replied, with simple earnestness.

"Then touch the victim on the altar of Baal, my son, and say as I do bid you," said Hamilcar.

Boldly, yet with a serious and awe-filled face, the boy laid one hand upon the body of the sacrificed war-horse, and lifting the other as did his father, he repeated after him this oath of vengeance:

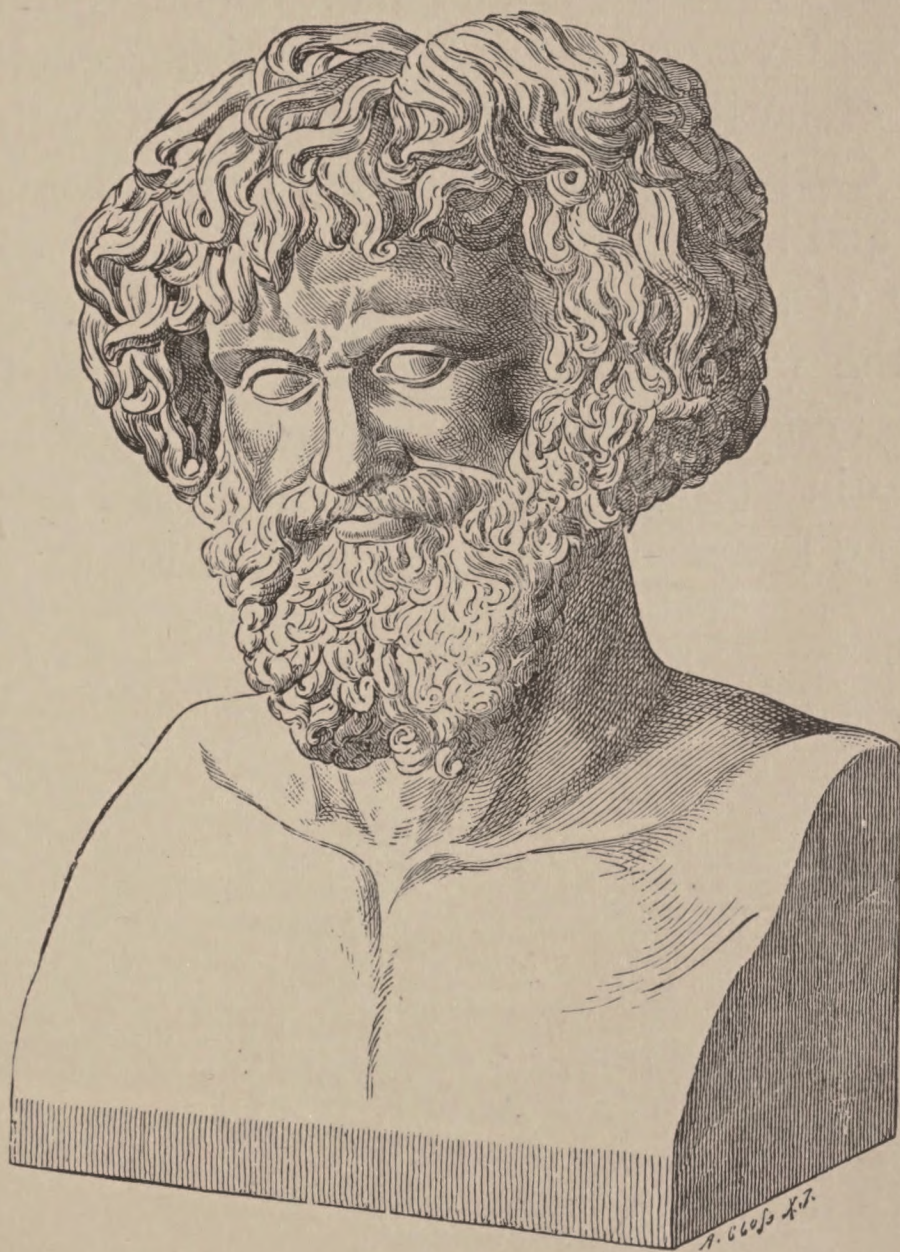
"Hear me, O Baal; lord of the heavens and god of time; king of the two zones. By the stars; by the meteors; by the volcanoes; by all that which burns; by the thirst of the desert; by the saltness of the sea; by the ashes of my ancestors; I, Hannibal, the son of Hamilcar, the son of Mago, admiral of the sea and ruler of the people, here before thee, Baal with the bull's head, Baal the supreme, Baal Hammon, do swear eternal enmity to Rome! Never to be friend or ally to Rome; never to make treaty or alliance with Rome; never to give succor or aid to Rome, but always and ever, to Rome, enmity and hate!"



A senseless and stupid array of words these must seem to us ; a needless and unhealthy promise for a father to enforce or a boy to make. An oath of vengeance and of hatred seems like a very terrible thing to us in these more enlightened days of liberty and of law. But we must study the character of people in the light of the times in which they lived. Let every boy and girl who has become interested in this brave little Carthaginian lad read the later life of Hannibal and the story of the " Punic wars " and see what was the effect of this oath in the temple of Baal upon the life of this son of the admiral-president. It inspired him to learn thoroughly, even while a boy, the art of war, and upon the death of his victorious father and of the Lord Hasdrubal, it raised him, at the age of eighteen, to the sole command of the Carthaginian armies in Spain ; it impelled him to brave the force and power of Rome in her own possessions, and, by one of the most masterly and daring moves in all history, to lead his army of one hundred thousand men across the towering Alps, conquer Italy, and only just miss the capture of Rome itself. It made him the untiring enemy of Rome until the day of his death, and, in the year 183 B.C., to poison himself rather than be the captive of Rome.

So Hannibal kept his oath. And though, to-day, Carthage, city of the merchants, once the splendid

home of over seven hundred thousand busy and prosperous people, destroyed by the hatred and enmity of Rome, is so complete a ruin that even the



HANNIBAL.

records of its greatness are but few and imperfect, the name and fame of Hannibal stand out clear and imperishable.

Even all the spitefulness and untruths of his Roman enemies and biographers cannot hide from the student of history his “courteous, mild, and chivalrous” nature. And, notwithstanding his fearful oath of vengeance and the untiring energy of his life of battles, the boys of this nineteenth century of Christianity and progress can find much to admire and much to honor in the life-story of this greatest of all Carthaginians and one of the greatest of the world’s illustrious men—Hannibal, the relentless enemy of Rome, the curly-headed boy of ten, who in that splendid city of the long ago was hailed and honored as the Favored of Baal.





III.

THE GAGE OF A PRINCESS.

(A Story of the Days of the Emperors.)

[A.D. 292.]



“THY right ; ho-ho!” and the burly Dacian burst into a loud and scornful laugh. “Thy right, indeed! Why, boy, what right hath an hostage of the emperor? Thou dar’st not even die without his word. What hope, then, hast thou to set thyself against me—against me, Galerius the Cæsar, one crook of whose finger could do thee to death? Ay, boy, could do thee to death, I say, ere ever so worthy a deed could come to the ears of that sallow-faced Cæsar, thy father, who, men do say, is half Christian himself and therefore doubly accursed.”

The handsome face of the young lad against whom these bitter words were launched flushed angrily.

“Have a care, have a care, Galerius,” he cried.

“For, big though thou art, and Cæsar-elect though thou may’st be, thou shalt not say aught against Constantius, my father, while his son doth live. Flavius Constantius doth outrank thee, proud one, and even though thou should’st call him sallow-faced,* he could give thee that in thy lying throat that could make thee turn sallow forever, never to show again thy must-colored nose and glutton-painted cheek.”

The now thoroughly enraged Dacian soldier strode angrily forward and made one dash at the bold-tongued lad. But the young hostage darted nimbly to one side and clapped his hand to the hilt of the *spatha*, or short-handled sword that hung at his belt. Before, however, he could draw it in defence, a light touch fell upon his arm, and in between the angry disputants stepped a young girl. She laid a restraining hand upon the arm of each.

“Nay, nay, good Galerius,” she said; “and nay, too, my Valerius; let not thy heated and unmeaning words stir up foolish and bitter strife. Sure, Galerius did but joke, even as did’st thou, my Valerius; but ’t were hardly safe, methinks, to thus bandy guard-room jokes in the audience-hall of him who is friend and father alike, even as he is

* Constantius, the father of Constantine, was called, by his soldiers and by the Romans, Constantius Chlorus, or Constantius the Sallow-faced, from the natural paleness of his complexion, which was in marked contrast to the red or swarthy faces of his royal colleagues.



“WAY THERE ; WAY FOR OUR MASTER AND OUR LORD !”

emperor and lord, to the brave Cæsar Galerius and to the noble hostage, Constantine."

The young Constantine, whom the girl had called by his home name of Valerius, bent his shapely head in courteous acknowledgment of the merited reproof. But heavy-witted bodies are not so readily tamed as lighter ones, and the big Dacian, Galerius, grew even more angry at this linking of his name with that of young Constantine.

"How, now, Valeria," he said, gruffly, "dost thou couple the name of this puling boy, who has scarce yet doffed his chlamys for his toga, with that of Galerius, the Cæsar and the soldier? Stand aside, girl, and let me but lay hand upon him. He shall rue the day that he dared thus insult the conqueror of Illyria and the terror of the Persian. Stand aside, I say, I will give him what he doth richly deserve—not the soldier's steel, but the school-boy's rod."

And, rudely putting the Princess Valeria from his path, the angry Galerius crossed to where young Constantine stood calmly awaiting him. But ere the second encounter could lead to any result, a loud voice rang through the great chamber.

"Way there; way for our Master and our Lord!"

It was the voice of Lucian, the *Magister* or grand chamberlain. Once again it rang through

the great hall. Then, officers and nobles prostrated themselves upon the mosaic pavement or stood bent in respectful obeisance ; the *pilum* butts of the Illyrian guards rang upon the floor in sudden salute ; the heavy arrassed curtain was flung aside, and down the broad stairway and into the audience-hall of the imperial palace at Nicomedia came Valerius Aurelius Diocletian, Emperor of Rome.

His robes of royal purple, heavy with rich brocade and boss, swept the floor as he walked ; his deep embroidered train was borne by four pages of the palace ; the imperial fillet of crusted gold gleamed in his crisp black hair ; and his hands, his arms, and his neck were encircled with bracelets and torques, sparkling with many gems.

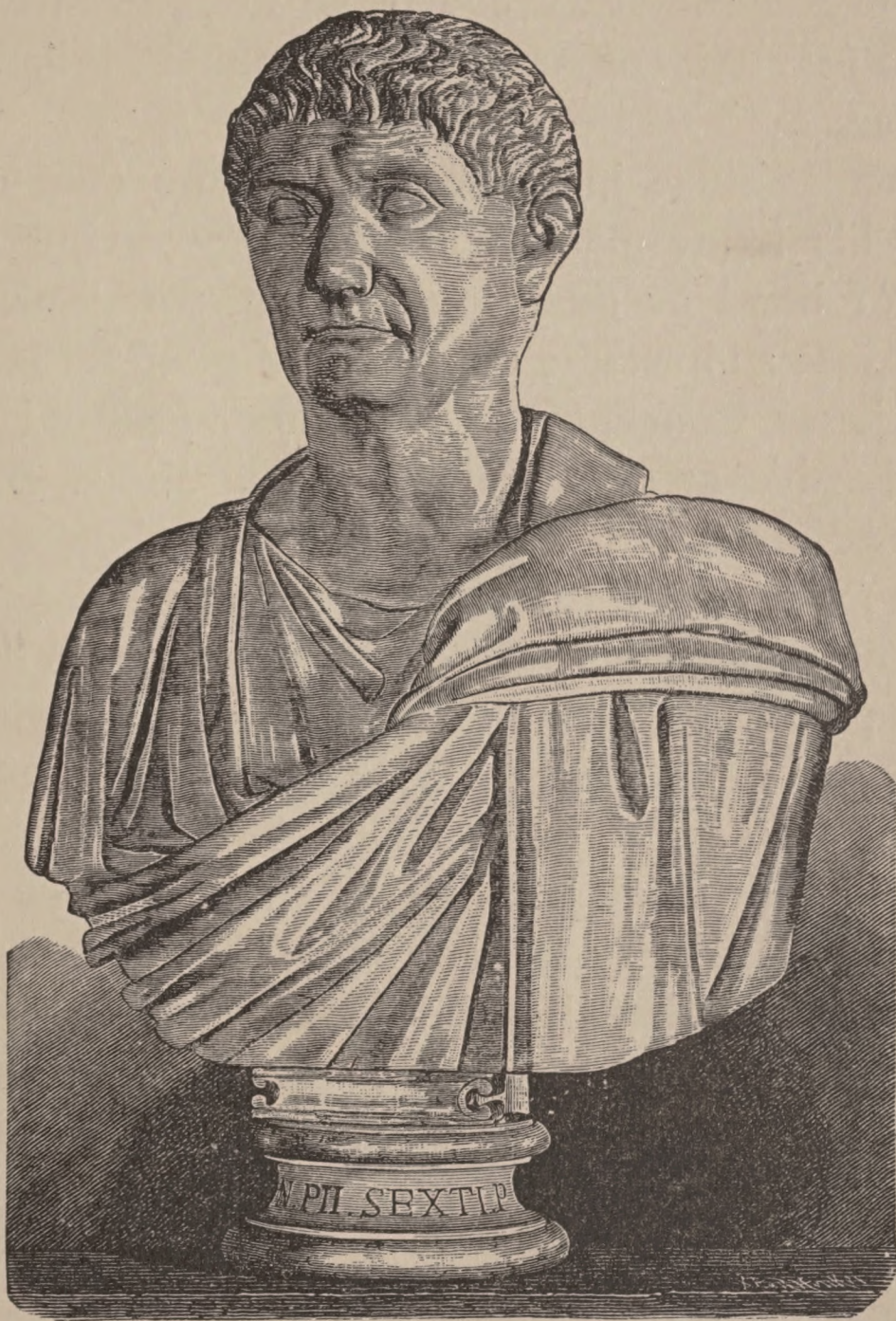
For the days of Roman simplicity in dress and customs had given place to show and state, and this Emperor of Rome, born a slave and raised to the throne by the force of circumstances and his own indomitable will, possessed a love of finery, ceremony, and display that entered into every detail of his daily life. No man, however, can rise from the lowest to the highest round of fortune's ladder without having both tact and determination, or without gaining much experience, good judgment, and common-sense. And all these qualities the Emperor Diocletian seems to have possessed.

But the more power a man attains so much the greater burden of responsibility must he bear, and to this burden had Diocletian succeeded when, upon the death of the warlike Carus and of his unfortunate son Numerian, the Prætorian guards had lifted upon their shields the popular and energetic Count of the Domestics,* Diocles the Dalmatian, and had hailed him as Diocletian, *Augustus, Imperator*.

Into his shrewd and practical mind came the idea that so vast an empire as Rome furnished sufficient business in the way of governing to admit of a division of responsibilities and a partnership of emperors.

And first he took into his imperial concern as partner his old companion in arms, the rough and ignorant but brave Pannonian soldier, Maximian, whom he declared as equally with himself Augustus and Emperor. But as the empire still proved too great a business investment, he soon after admitted two more associate emperors, or junior partners, with the title of Cæsars, Constantius the Illyrian and Galerius the Dacian. And so, by the wisdom of Diocletian, whom men called "the Just," the Roman empire, of which Rome was no longer the capital, was ruled over by four emperors, of

* An officer of the Eastern empire equivalent to the Commander of the Imperial Body Guard.



DIOCLETIAN THE EMPEROR—CALLED “THE JUST.”

whom not one was a Roman, and who established their capitals and their courts, far away from Rome, in the four cities of Nicomedia, Sirmium, Milan, and Treves.

And, because in those old days no man dared trust his fellow-man without first receiving some sort of bond or guaranty, the emperor took into his palace as hostage, or pledge of good faith, from the Cæsar Constantius, the sixteen-year-old Constantine his son. From Galerius, whose department adjoined his own, he required no hostage.

The wise Diocletian, as he moved through the audience-hall to his seat of justice, a great gilded throne blazoned with the eagles of Rome, marked the angry looks on the faces of the two princes, and, as they stood, one on either hand, he said to them in that calm, judicial tone that always gave force and authority to his words :

“ My sons, black looks do not become either the Cæsar or the son of a Cæsar. Tell me nothing of your differences but rather aid me by your smiles. The king’s face should ever bring grace to those on whose help he doth rely.”

The stubborn Galerius, still brooding over his quarrel with Constantine, did not relish this second coupling of his name with that of the lad he disliked.

“ And is it to be always Cæsar ? ” he muttered, almost sulkily.

“It is to be what I will, son Galerius,” said Diocletian, sternly. “If it was my will that made thee Cæsar, my will, too, can unmake thee. But this is folly. We waste words when more serious matters press.” And at once the busy monarch plunged into the business of the empire, and speedily forgot the troubles that were brewing between his colleague and his hostage.

But neither of them forgot it ; and that very day was the war of words renewed.

So lavish in his display was Diocletian the Emperor, and so great was his desire to have his capital city of Nicomedia outrival Rome, that he had built in that fair city on the Sea of Marmora (now almost lost in the ruins that encircle the miserable little Turkish town of Ismid), besides the temples and libraries, the baths and forum, the circus and the amphitheatre, a splendid palace, not only for his own imperial self, but one for his wife, the Empress Prisca, and one also for the Princess Valeria, his daughter.

The palace of the young princess was a gleaming marble building with courts and halls, gardens and porticos, and airy living-rooms that looked out upon the blue Sea of Marmora, and off toward the equally blue outlines of the distant Balkan mountains. In the broad and sculptured *atrium* of the palace sat the handsome young Constantine

deep in thought. These two young people—Valeria the princess and Constantine the hostage—were devoted friends, and the lad spent many happy hours in the palace of the princess. It was death for any man to penetrate beyond the *atrium* but that, at least, was free to the friends of Valeria, and there was Constantine often to be found. To-day, however, he was in a thoughtful mood. His was a nature formed for action and leadership, and, again and again, during his years of hostageship he had longed to be freed from this genteel servitude of an emperor's palace, fighting against the barbarians in Gaul or Britain under his father's standard, or himself leading the soldiers of the empire against a foreign foe. Every lad of spirit experiences this desire for freedom and action, never dreaming that by far the best "school of the soldier" is the manual of control over one's own, and often rebellious, self.

And as he sat thus, meditating, and playing, almost mechanically, with the pet pigeons of the princess, into the *atrium* strode the Cæsar Galerius.

"So, thou art here, malapert, are thou?" burst out the Dacian, as his eye fell upon the young Constantine. "And why, I pray? To mummer, as doth the princess, so 't is said, before the cross of the Christians, or to mumble words, without gifts or altar, as do they? Bah! Had I but my

way here, cross and Christians should alike go to the fire and the rack for daring thus to brave the immortal gods. And thou and thy renegade father

should'st go with them."

"Galerius," said Constantine, firm of voice, but flushed of face, "thrice now this day hast thou sought to quarrel



HE SAT IN THE ATRIUM PLAYING WITH THE PET PIGEONS OF THE PRINCESS.

with me. Thou knowest that I may not honorably jeopardize my father's loyalty and station by here entering into conflict with thee. But were it not for this, I do declare to thee, by Hercules

and by Jove, that, boy though thou dost deem me, yet would I not brook for one moment thy slanderous speeches and thy lying tongue."

"*If! If!* Ay, always *if*," cried Galerius, scornfully. "'*If*' is a boy's weapon, and doth but beat the air full harmlessly. This morning I did tell thee I would correct thy manners with the school-boy's rod. Galerius never eats his words. Come hither, boy!" And, as if in sheer desire to display his brutal strength, the big Dacian wrenched a gilded rung from the nearest chair and flourished it angrily toward the boy.

Constantine never flinched, but with his lips more firmly set, he drew his *spatha* from his sword-belt, and with the words: "Ah, but this passeth all patience," he would have sprung straight at Galerius' throat. But once again the same fair peace-maker interfered.

"Nay, princes and brothers both," cried Valeria, bravely stepping in between their lifted weapons, "this were scarce seemly or courteous in a lady's atrium. Besides the law of this, my house, is the noble sentence that the good presbyter Anthimus did read me from his scroll this day: Love your enemies, bless them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute you."

"Ho; a coward's rule that, my Valeria," said Galerius, contemptuously, and even the courtly

Constantine looked dubious over such a seemingly ridiculous precept.

“Nay, he is the coward that dareth not to forgive,” said the princess, grandly; “for, so it seemeth to me, it doth call for more of courage to love your enemies than to do battle with them, as indeed it doth to follow the way that the wise Anthimus did also read to me from his precious scroll: If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink.”

“Ay; a feast of iron and a drink of blood! That were the only food for foes,” said the savage Dacian. And then he added: “Bah, girl! this craven counsel cometh from naught save these curs of Christians, who would discrown all valor and wreck the altars of the gods. Would that I but had the dealing with them!”

“Nay, but I have heard of Christians who did not make scorn of valor,” said young Constantine. “Was not the ‘Thundering Legion’ of the great Marcus made of these same Christians? And, indeed, my father hath told me that in the days of Alexander Severus and of Philip the Arabian—”

“Thy father, indeed!” broke in the Cæsar Galerius, to whom any reference to his rival Cæsar was even as is a red rag in the face of a bull, “thy father, indeed! doth he dare—”

“Dare!” echoed the young Constantine, roused

in his turn, "he dareth more than thou, Galerius. And he hath proved it, too, on Gaul and Briton, as thou well doth know."

"'T is not what the good Constantius dareth, my brothers," came the pleading voice of Valeria, anxious to avert a new quarrel; "'t is what ye do dare." And then, as a distant trumpet peal came to their ears, she cried joyfully, recognizing in it a possible means of staying this tide of bitterness: "But hark! there soundeth the *ædile's* trumpet. Let us to the circus and see what men may dare in the arena."

Both her guests readily assented, and soon, with the princess and her throng of attendants, the two hot-heads were on their way to the great amphitheatre of Nicomedia.

It was a splendid open-air circus. Tier upon tier rose the encircling seats, thronged with the pleasure-seekers who in those brutal days liked to take their pleasures cruelly. Only the Christians, schooled to a horror and distaste of such debasing sport, consistently stayed away from these public slaughters of beasts and of men, and thereby incurred the hatred and contempt of pagan Rome.

Beneath a brilliantly colored awning, to shield her from the sun, sat the Princess Valeria, and at either hand, in her *suggestum*, or state-box, sat her two guests, Galerius and Constantine.



"THE WISE ANTHIMUS" AND HIS SCROLL.

The *pompa*, or opening procession, with its gorgeous display and spectacle, was over as they entered the *podium*, or reserved section of the circus, and the agile and muscular wrestlers were already hard at work in trip and tussle. The rope-dances and the foot-races speedily followed, and the sprightly Valeria greatly enjoyed watching the trained elephant walk the tight-rope. But both Constantine and Galerius thought this mere trifling, and were anxious for the chariot races and the wild-beast fight.

The races proved long and exciting. Green and blue, gold and orange (the colors of the fluttering ribbons worn by the chariot-drivers), struggled for the lead, and when the green won in a close neck-and-neck with the blue, the great enclosure rang with the conflicting shouts of the multitude. But as the army of "supernumeraries" made the arena ready for the next performance—the wild-beast fight,—Galerius was grumbling and sulky, for he had wagered high with Constantine upon the races, and the green had won when he had backed the blue. Besides, the gladiators were not to fight to-day, and Galerius, who enjoyed a sport only as it increased in brutality, voted the day's programme a bore.

"Of what use is it," he grumbled, "to pit bull against lion, or dogs against bear? They will fight

only for their stupid lives. Why did not the *editor* give us the gladiators, or at least throw in a few Christians to the lions as they did in Valerian's day?"

The Princess Valeria resented this cruel wish. So much time had passed since a season of persecution against the growing sect of Christians that the Church was fast becoming strong and influential, and many of the most trusted officers of Diocletian the Emperor were known to be of this sect. In fact, it was openly reported that both Valeria the princess, and the empress Prisca, her mother, were secret worshippers at the Christian altars.

"Nay, nay, Galerius," said the princess, "'t were far better to face brute with brute than thus to waste a human life."

"Even so, Valeria," said young Constantine, gravely. "It doth seem wisest to fight brute with brute rather than to jeopard the life of a man against that which hath neither soul nor sense. 'T were braver, I should say, for a man to face a lion in defence of something other than his own life—mayhap a maid, mayhap a martyr,—for then, indeed, he doth risk his life for a noble end."

Valeria smiled approval as she heard her sentiments thus echoed by this brave lad.

"'T is even as Anthimus did read to me," she

said. “ ‘Greater love hath no man than this—that a man lay down his life for his friends.’ See,” she added, “here is my jewelled armlet which the emperor did give me. I prize it highly. Yet would I freely yield it up as gage of honor or trophy for victory to him who, as you do say, my Constantine, would, for its winning, face death in defence of maid or martyr, or for one who suffered wrong.”

Just then with almost noiseless mechanism the iron grating opposite the royal box rolled aside, and, with a roar of mingled rage and defiance, a great African lion dashed into the arena. The tawny monster stood for an instant lashing his sides with his tufted tail, and steadfastly regarding the throng before him.

“ Ah,” said Valeria, “what a splendid beast! See, my Constantine, ’t is the one that Marcian the *editor* did tell us of. He hath but just received him from Alexandria. He is to be matched in fight against the big black bull of Spain and the great *unicornis* * from the East.”

“ Bah !” why not against a man !” cried Galerius. “That were grander sport. Holo then ; here is a chance for thy boasted valor, boy. Now prove thy Christian cant.” And with a quick move he

* The Indian rhinoceros, supposed to be the original of the fabled unicorn.



tore the armlet from Valeria's hand. "If that thou, who dost prate so loudly of facing the beasts for the saving of maid or martyr, doth not only fill the air with words, go down and face yon lion, if thou darest, for something worthier than maid or martyr—the gage of thy princess!" And with the sneer of taunting unbelief in voice and face, the burly Cæsar flung down the armlet of the princess upon the sands of the arena.

Valeria gave a sob of despair. "O my precious armlet!" she cried, "Galerius, how dare —— Constantine, why did'st thou let him?"

The young Constantine said nothing. He merely cast one look of scorn upon the taunting Galerius, and the next instant had leaped down into the arena.

A mingled shout of amazement, horror, and despair rang through the crowded circus, for the son of the Cæsar Constantius was a prime favorite with the people of Nicomedia, and none could tell why he leaped thus into the arena. The iron gratings which were just parting to release the lion's foes closed again with sudden clang, and like its echo rose the roar of the angry brute. He saw his prey and with a bound sprang toward him.

Constantine's wary eye marked the spring of the lion and the position of the coveted armlet. He grasped his trusty *spatha* firmly and measured the distance with his eye. Then he shifted his ground

and drew a step nearer to the gage. Poor Valeria, who had sat spell-bound as she comprehended Constantine's great danger, now sprang to her feet, and, as if she could not bear to see her friend struck down before her eyes, she passed swiftly from the royal box, and, with pale and anxious face, leaned against the column for support, her back turned to the broad arena. Galerius, amazed, yet moved by the unexpected bravery of this son of his rival Cæsar, leaned far over his box and breathlessly watched every movement of the lad.

Again the lion sprang. But Constantine had not been trained in the royal gymnasium without gaining quickness of movement and firmness of step. At just the right moment he leaped aside. The short blade of his *spatha* gleamed aloft; down it came with swift, unerring aim, and with sudden thrust—once, twice, thrice, even before the lion could crouch for another spring, the light blade was buried to the hilt in the heart and throat of the beast.

Then, as the lad, spurning his fallen foe with his foot, leaped across the prostrate carcass and picked up the gage of the princess, so great a shout rang through the arena that the guards at the outer gate heard and took it up, and the happy Valeria, assured now of the safety of her friend, came swiftly back

to the royal box and received her gage of honor from the valorous boy.

And Galerius said : “ Now, by the shield of Mars, but that was bravely done ! I did not think thou had'st so much of spirit, boy.”

“ I have but what my father did give to me, Galerius,” said young Constantine, proudly, “ and that would never see a fellow-man sent to the beasts or death save for a crime committed or an evil done. Constantius Chlorus hath a kindly heart—even though he be a Cæsar.”

“ Tush, tush, boy,” said Galerius, gruffly. “ Thou art but a fool with thy boyish pratings and thy boyish haste. Galerius Cæsar yet will find a way to check thy boyish strivings and thy stubborn will, even though thy father be a Cæsar and thou an hostage of the emperor. Galerius Cæsar neither forgives nor forgets.”

And, in truth, history does but record the keeping of the Dacian's hostile pledge. For, through all the years and until, by his own stout heart and ready brain, the young Constantine upon his father's death escaped from the palace and the enmity of his ferocious rival, the lad's life was full of the petty and persistent persecutions with which Galerius Cæsar pursued him, and which not even the friendship of the Emperor Diocletian could prevent.

For Diocletian the Emperor as he grew in years



THE VISION OF CONSTANTINE.

lost the manliness that had made his earlier days full of strength and justice. In the year 304 he gave up his office as Emperor of Rome, and passed his life as a country gentleman raising cabbages on an Austrian farm. But before he thus resigned the imperial power into the hands of Galerius, he gave his consent to an edict that has covered his name with infamy and shame—the last persecution of the Christians, in the year 303.

The horror of all this, however, is to be laid to the influence of Galerius Cæsar, who, hating the Christians for their gentler manners and their nobler ways, planned, advocated, and pushed forward their terrible persecution with all the strength of a vindictive and brutal nature.

And when the day of trial came, the Princess Valeria could not stand the test. When the order was issued that, in all the palaces, every person must sacrifice to the gods of Rome, she found herself unable to live in loyalty to her new faith, and while others died for it without fear or flinching, she lost alike the martyr's glory and the martyr's crown.

But then, poor girl, she had at that time become the wife of Galerius Cæsar, and that was perhaps martyrdom enough. And though she was Empress of Rome and the friend of Constantine, her name is remembered in history only as that of a sad and



CONSTANTINE.

unfortunate woman, whose last years were shadowed by a bitter persecution and closed by a tragic death. Indeed, as Gibbon, the historian, declares, her "melancholy adventures might furnish a very singular subject for a tragedy."

But into this sad recital our story cannot go. It seeks to give us but one glimpse at the young Roman life of that distant day. It cannot, therefore, tell of the horrible end of the brutal Emperor Galerius, nor of the victorious progress of the brave young Constantine, who, declared emperor at thirty-two, had at thirty-five a wonderful vision of a flaming cross and a gleaming message, and became at last sole master of the Roman world and the first Christian emperor.

And, though there is much to censure and much to applaud in the life-story of this wonderful man, not all the success, the glory, or the fame of Constantine the Great can give us more of pleasure than this story of his younger days, when, in the crowded circus at Nicomedia he proved at once his courtesy, his chivalry, and his courage by rescuing from beneath the very jaws of the African lion the Princess Valeria's gage.



IV.

THE TELL-TALE FOOT.

(A Story of the Frankish Kings.)

[A.D. 750.]



VERY many years ago there lived in that part of Northeastern France known as the Laonnais, but now to be found on your maps of modern France as the Department of Aisne, a certain nobleman, whom men called the Graf, or Count, Charibert, Lord of Laon.

His great castle stood boldly outlined against the clear French sky on the crest of the lonely little hill along whose slopes now rise the roofs and spires of modern Laon. From parapet and bartizan the warder, pacing to and fro, could look far across the northern plain to the slowly widening Scheldt, and west and south to the forests of St. Gobain and the wooded hills of ancient Soissons.

The stout old castle had witnessed many a bloody foray and many a stubborn siege. For that lonely hill of Laon has been through generations the battle-ground of Gaul and Roman, Vandal and Hun, Frank and Burgundian, Frenchman and Englishman. The blessed Saint Remi, who had baptized the warlike Clovis, first of the Christian kings of France, had played as a boy beneath the shadow of Laon's castle walls, and the grim fortress was esteemed one of the strongest outposts of the Merovingian kings.

In those days France was all German. Indeed, France and Germany had, through two centuries, formed the great kingdom of the Franks, which King Clovis had conquered and ruled. But discord and dissension among his sons had divided this splendid heritage, and now the eastern and western sections, known respectively as Austrasia or the eastern kingdom, and Neustrasia, or the new lands, were at deadly feud with each other. And so it came to pass that the stout castle of Laon was the eastern defence of Neustrasia, or Neustria, as it was commonly called, against the inroads and forays of the hostile barons of the eastern kingdom.

And almost as stout a human outpost was the Lord of Laon in the year 750. Stern and warlike, almost brutal, according to the manner of his day,

the Count Charibert was feared alike by vassal and by foe. He owned no overlord but his liege, the king, and he seemed to love but two things in life—his honor as Lord of Laon and his fair-haired daughter, the beautiful Lady Bertha.

The Lady Bertha, so the records assure us, was both beautiful and good. She had, however, two things to trouble her—though these, I am certain, were not esteemed such crosses by the girls of the Lady Bertha's time as they would be by the girls of our more fastidious day : she was a very tall girl—so tall, indeed, that some of the old records declare her to have been a giantess,—and she had one foot which was larger and longer than the other. It is this last deformity, in fact, if such it can be called, that has given to the Lady Bertha the name by which, for more than eleven centuries, she has been known in history and romance—*Bertha au grand pied*—Bertha with the Big Foot.

But, notwithstanding her height—which was probably not really gigantic,—and despite her big foot—which, doubtless, was not so very monstrous,—the fair face and gentle manners of the Lady Bertha made her beloved by all the vassals of her father, the Count Charibert, and renowned for many a mile beyond the walls of Laon.

The Lady Bertha was a very busy young woman, as were all the girls of her day. Her duties were

many and laborious, for not even a count's daughter could play the grand lady. Power has its responsibilities, as the Lady Bertha could have told you, and one bright summer morning found her especially busy. The baking and brewing, the spinning and the burnishing which needed all to be superintended either by her mother, the Countess Blanche, or herself, had filled up all her morning hours, and now, as she sat with her cousin, Aliste, and the other girls of noble birth who found a home in the castle of the Count Charibert, she was so occupied with embroidery and missal that she even failed to hear the sound of the trumpet that sounded at the great gate, or to mark the stir and bustle that came from the courtyard near to the bench where the maidens were sitting.

But the other girls heard it, and missal and embroidery failed to have further interest for them. They sprang from their bench and clustered around the open window. Then the Lady Bertha, too, grew interested.

"What is astir, cousin?" she asked of Aliste.

"Truly, a messenger from the king's court, I think," replied the girl, "and not on warlike matters, surely, for he is trapped out so bravely that it doth seem as though he cometh more as a wedding-guest than as a war-man."

"A wedding-guest indeed!" laughed Bertha,



"SHE WAS SO OCCUPIED WITH EMBROIDERY AND MISSAL."

merrily, "then must he be thine, girl, for sure none other of us looks for such a cavalier."

"Nay, he is none of mine, lady," protested Aliste, still peering from the window. "'T is liker to be thine, say I. So ; now hath he gone within, with my lord count bowing before him. Our lord would not thus bend did he not deem him——"

But here the voice of the Count Charibert himself cut off further speculation.

"Holo ! soho !" he cried, loudly, "Margiste ! Aliste ! Summon the Lady Bertha !"

"See, now ; what said I, cousin ?" said Aliste, gayly ; "'t is thee the messenger doth seek."

So, dutifully, as was her wont, though now herself somewhat curious, the Lady Bertha descended the stairs that led to the audience-hall. There stood the Count Charibert, there the highest vassal-lords of his seignory, and there, too, the royal messenger, gorgeous in the half barbaric, half Roman dress that made up the state costume of the Frankish court.

"Soho, my lady-bird, thou art come," said the Count, advancing to meet her. "Here standeth the Graf Guntrum of Soissons, messenger from the court, asking thy hand in marriage for his lord and mine—the noble Mayor Pepin, lord of the palace of the king. What say'st thou. in reply, my Bertha ?"

The Lady Bertha was too well schooled in the ways of her time to answer other than she did.

"It shall be even as thou dost say, my father," was all she said.

"Then, thus it is," said the Count Charibert, turning to the royal envoy. "The Mayor Pepin shall have my daughter, Bertha, to wife, and she shall go attended to his court ere yet another moon be at its full. Now rest thee, my lord count, while thou and I do agree upon the *sponsalia* and the *morgengabe*." * And then, with mingled feast and business-talk, was the betrothal completed.

And so it came to pass that within three weeks from the day of the Count Guntrum's visit, the Lady Bertha, escorted by her uncle, the Obgraf (or Viscount) Tybers, and fifty spearmen of her father's train, and attended by her aunt Margiste, her cousin Aliste, and a dozen ladies and serving-women, was riding from the castle of Laon to distant Paris to become the bride of the foremost man in the kingdom, and one whom she had never seen—the Lord Pepin, mayor of the palace of the king.

At the date of our story the Merovingian kings of France, descendants of the great Clovis though they were, had become weak and purposeless monarchs—*rois fainéans*, lazy kings, they were called.

* The *sponsalia* and *morgengabe* were the dowry or marriage settlements which the bridegroom agreed to give both before and after the wedding ceremony.

Kings only in name, both their power and authority were usurped and wielded by the chief officer of the realm, whose puppets and creatures they were, the *major domus*, or mayor of the palace. And in the year 750 the *major domus* of King Childeric III.,—Pepin, the son of Carl, the son of Pepin Heristal,—was, in everything but the royal title, king of France.

This mayor of the palace was just the reverse of Bertha of Laon. For he was so small of stature as to be nicknamed “Shorty”; and that he was not fair of face his picture on the opposite page will convince you. And yet this man, known as Pepin *le bref*, or Pepin the Short, was both brave and wise. He was harsh and rough in manner, of course; all the world was harsh and rough and brutal in his day. But he was just and far-seeing, sturdy and valiant as became the son of one of the heroes of the Middle Ages—that defender of Christendom whose terrible battle-blows against the invading Moslems in the battle of Poitiers had given him the name of Carl Martel, or Charles the Hammer.

There are always in this world people who are jealous, envious, and designing. They can not bear to witness the good-fortune of others or see those whom they know faring better than themselves. They lose no opportunity to over-reach and



get the better of their rivals or their acquaintances, or to work as much harm as possible against those who are the objects of their envy. This, if we read history aright, seems to have been an even more prominent feature in olden times than it is to-day. For the civilizing and softening power of an advancing Christianity let us all be thankful. When might makes right, might and malice become identical. It was this very combination of malicious envy and of temporary power that worked ill to the Lady Bertha.

Tybers the Obgraf, or assistant count, was envious of the rank and power of his brother, the Count Charibert; the Lady Margiste, his wife, was envious of the splendid marriage which had been arranged for her niece, the daughter of her overlord; Aliste, the daughter of the obgraf, was envious of Bertha because, while this pink and white cousin of hers was to become the first lady of the land, she herself—a much more beautiful girl, so she firmly believed,—was to remain only a vassal-companion and tiring-woman.

So these three envious ones began forthwith to plot against the very maiden whom they had promised their lord the count to escort safely to her new home. No sooner had they left Laon's gates than Aliste, at the instigation of her mother, commenced her part of the programme.

“Verily, my lady cousin,” she said, while a deep sigh, as of sympathy, accompanied her words. “Verily, now, I would that we were riding elsewhere than to the lord mayor’s palace at Paris.”

“And why, Aliste?” her cousin inquired.

“Oh—ask me not,” replied the girl, with apparent reluctance; “or, indeed, if thou must know, thou art much too fair and good to be sacrificed to so grim an ogre as this same lord mayor, the dwarf Pepin.”

“Ogre and dwarf! what means this, girl?” cried Bertha, turning upon her cousin a look of surprise and inquiry. But Aliste, trained to her work of deception, met her cousin’s gaze with a well-counterfeited look of horror and of sadness, and proceeded gradually—as if half afraid to speak and yet anxious for her cousin’s happiness—to tell her story.

Bertha’s uncle, the Obgraf Tybers, so Aliste declared, out of love and affection for the Lady Bertha, his niece, and because he had long had suspicion of the truth, had made special inquiry by spies and bribing, into the character and home-life of the lord mayor, Pepin. And the good Tybers was horrified at what he had thus discovered.

The lord mayor, he declared, was a greater monster than ever the Lady Bertha’s old nurse Begga had told of in fairy tales, or the wise priest Ratgar

had learned from pagan lore. He had already had five wives, two of whom he had smothered, two beheaded, and one drowned in boiling oil. He was in fact, according to Aliste's telling, a real, living Bluebeard, who married his sweet young wives only to murder them, and who would surely do the same to Bertha, should she displease or anger him. Not even the power of her father, the Count Charibert, so Aliste declared, could protect or avenge his daughter, for, as was well known, the law of the land protected the king against his seigniors and barons, whatever he might say or do; and though the Lord Pepin was not king in name, all men did know that he was mightier than the king, for he himself both made and executed the law of the land.

All this and much more did the wily Aliste communicate to the horrified Lady Bertha—not all at once, but little by little, playing upon her fears and adding new horrors as she proceeded. And at last the poor girl, whose life had known only love at home—although her father was often stern and harsh,—became greatly disturbed and terrified at the prospect before her, and feared the unknown fate that was in store for her when once she had become the bride of this savage ogre, dwarf and monster, Pepin *le bref*.

She turned for help and consolation, first to her

aunt Margiste and then to her uncle, the Obgraf Tybers. But from neither of them could she obtain reassurance or comfort. And at last came the direct question : “O, my uncle, can you not save me from this dreadful fate?”

At first the cautious Tybers had nothing to suggest. He really could not advise. His brother, the count, had not listened to his entreaties, and should he now help his niece to escape, he would be accounted a traitor to his seignior and overlord. At last, as if by a happy thought, Margiste, the wife of the obgraf, said :

“Our comfort, dear niece, as are our lives also, is thine. Where danger doth threaten thee, 't is for us to shield thee from it even if we die in so doing. See now, I have a plan. Here is Aliste ; she is my daughter and my pride ; and yet for thy safety would we hazard her own. Let then Aliste, my daughter, be for but a few days the Lady Bertha ; be thou the vassal-lady Aliste, to serve and attend her. The Lord Pepin shall receive her as Bertha, his bride—and, if she dieth, she dieth ! Only this : thine uncle Tybers shall bear instant tidings to thy father, the count, if Aliste doth die. If not, then in ten days' time shall the Lord Pepin have knowledge of the change, all the blame of which will we take unto us, and, when he shall see thee, thy beauty and high-born ways shall reconcile him

to thee and then shalt thou be, in deed and in truth, the Lord Pepin's noble bride."

It was a bold scheme, shrewdly devised ; and had but the Lady Bertha been, herself, less truthful and trusting, she would have seen through the deception. But she believed so firmly in the love and loyalty of her kinsfolk that she listened, pondered, and finally, as her only safety, accepted the plan which her aunt proposed. Then she kissed and wept over her dear cousin Aliste, who would thus willingly risk life and peace of mind for her sake, and so far the plot proved successful.

Ere the cavalcade reached the gates of old Paris the change had been made. Aliste dressed in the rich bridal robes of the Lady Bertha, rode in the place of honor in the ox-drawn litter, while at her feet, as waiting-maiden and tire-woman sat the real bride, the disguised Bertha.

The palace of the kings of France was the same as that built by the old Roman governors—a splendid building on the left bank of the Seine, the remains of which may still be seen in Julian's Baths near to the modern Hôtel de Cluny. Within and around it torches flared and blazed, and the notes of barbaric music floated through its open doors as the *major domus* of King Childeric III., the powerful lord of the palace, Pepin *le bref*, received and honored his supposed bride.

The records do not state whether or not he was charmed with the face and manners of Aliste, whose dark hair and black eyes and low, contracted brows were of a far different type of beauty from that of her cousin, the lovely, golden-haired Bertha. Probably, as the marriages of great folks in those far-off days were matters of state-craft and policy rather than of affection, the lord mayor thought but little of the appearance of his bride, only congratulating himself that this alliance to so powerful a seignior as the count of Laon would strengthen his position and help forward his assumption of the royal title—an action upon which he had now determined.

Bertha, the hand-maid, had been purposely kept in the background during all the pageant and ceremony in which she should have held so prominent a place. “Wait but ten days, my niece,” said the wily Tybers the Obgraf, “and we shall see thee in thy rightful place. The lord mayor is crafty and full of guile. Be thou on thy guard and let him see thee not, and this very night will Morent, my *litus*,* bear thee to a place of safety, there to bide until thy time of peril is past,”

Bertha could see nothing either crafty or cruel in the Lord Pepin’s looks, and he was not by any

* A sort of vassal-freedman ; like the “clients” of old Rome they were bound to do work and service for their lord when so ordered.

means the dwarf in stature that she had expected to find. But she supposed that, of course, her good uncle knew better than did she what was wisest for her, and so she said nothing.

More than a hundred miles to the southwest of Paris in that section of France watered by the rivers Sarthe and Loire, there stretched, centuries ago, the vast forest of Mans. Within this forest were numbers of huts, in which lived the *liberti*, or free foresters, who had in charge the hunting-grounds of their king. Almost in the heart of the forest of Mans stood the cottage and cleared land of the *libertus* Simon. One night as Simon and Hilda his wife sat in their cabin, shaping bows and weaving baskets, they heard a strange sound at their door. Simon the forester and Hilda his wife were not troubled with many neighbors in that deep forest—unless the wolf and the boar, the bear and the fox could be counted as such. This sound, as of some one at the door, therefore, quite startled them, and catching up a brand from the hearth, Simon fanned it into a flame and strode toward the door.

He opened the door cautiously, for in those days one needed to be prepared to face foe as well as friend. But ere the door was fully opened he uttered a cry of surprise, as he saw at his feet, fallen prone across his threshold, the fainting form of a tall, fair-haired, and pale-faced young girl.

“Who art thou? What want ye?” he cried, and “What want ye?” echoed his equally startled wife. But the girl answered not a word. She lay there so still and white that at last the good wife Hilda, recovering from her surprise and full of pity for the outcast, lifted the girl in her strong arms and laid her upon the bed. And then, when strength and life came back, the girl told her story.

Of course, she was Bertha, and, of course, she had now learned all the treachery and cruelty of her false-hearted uncle, the Obgraf Tybers. Following out the cruel commands of his master, the *litus* Morent had taken her farther and farther away from the gates of Paris, and led her deeper and deeper into the wild forest. Then at the last repenting of the promise he had made, to put so fair and unfortunate a maiden to death, he had simply given her her life—deserting her in an almost trackless forest.

For days Bertha wandered aimlessly through the forest, until spent with hunger and weariness she was about to give up the struggle for life, when she had caught through the trees the gleam of the firelight in the forester's cabin. Dragging herself to the hut she had expended her little remaining strength in fruitless attempts to knock upon the door, and had fallen fainting across the threshold.

All this she told the good forester and his wife, but withheld from them her real name and station, fearing lest she might be returned to that deadly palace, where her treacherous cousin ruled in her stead as the bride of the Lord Pepin.

But, when Hilda had nursed her back to health and strength, Bertha begged to be allowed to stay with her and be her hand-maiden. And Hilda, who had learned to love this fair-faced girl who had escaped some bitter peril, willingly assented ; and so it came to pass that the lord mayor's bride became a servant in the forester's cabin.

Meanwhile, in the castle of the Lord of Laon, the Countess Blanche sorrowed because of her loneliness, now that her dearly-loved daughter had left her side, and longed to visit the "lady mayoress."

At last, the Count Charibert bade her make ready and go to the court of the lord mayor, there to convince herself of their Bertha's high estate and happiness.

"Thou art a foolish woman," said the lord count, "and wilt have thy labor for thy pains ; our daughter Bertha is too full of power and princely cares to give thee over-much of time or welcome. But go thy way and bring me back report of the gilded caging of my lady-bird."

At once the countess set out for Paris, duly and honorably escorted as became the Lady of Laon.

As she drew near to the old town she sent forward her outriders and herald to announce her coming to the lord mayor, and, as she followed leisurely, thought to gratify her motherly pride by learning from the people of their love and affection for her beautiful daughter.

But to her astonishment she heard only complaints and revilings. The Lady Bertha was a fiend, a monster, a tyrant, a *stria*—this last declared with bated breath ; for, by the Salic law, to call a woman a *stria* or witch rendered one liable to a fine of one hundred and eighty-seven sols, or very nearly as much as the murderer's penalty of five golden dollars. The Lady Bertha, so the people said, had worked them ill in every possible way that a tyrant could.

“Nay, nay,” exclaimed the astonished mother, “that can never be. Why, my Bertha is gentle, and kind and good, full of charity, and without thought of working ill to any one. Ye are the wicked ones who seek to do her grievous wrong.”

At last the walls of Paris came in sight, and a deputation from the palace, came out to greet the mother of their lord mayor's wife. Within the palace audience-hall the Lord Pepin himself received her, with stately though half barbaric welcome.

“But ah, my mother,” he said, “the Lady Ber-

tha is ill ; unable, she sayeth, to bear the joy and tremor of thy welcome visit. She bids me give thee due courtesy and honor, but to let my presence stand for hers."

Here was a new surprise for the lady mother.

"How, my lord and son," she said in amazement, "my daughter will not see me? Why, what new freak is this. She, who was always ready to tell her mother all her woes and wishes, now, you say, will not look upon my face? Nay, here is some mystery, I fear. I *will* see my child."

And sweeping past the Lord Pepin, who seemed both sorrowful and surprised, she made her way to her daughter's apartments.

Through the arrassed entrance she caught the sound of harsh and impatient words. The voice of an angry young woman is never a pleasant thing to hear, and petulance and threats from one who has always been gentle and loving and tender are sad indeed. And the voice too sounded far different from her daughter's.

"What do I hear," said the Countess Blanche, pausing in the door-way, "surely not my Bertha's voice. Bertha, 't is I, thy mother, child ; do not thus receive me ; do not——" and then the sad-hearted mother stopped, too amazed for speech ; for even the face of her daughter was turned away from her and hidden beneath the draperies of the



BERTHA.

bed. But the draperies, hastily drawn over the head of the supposed invalid, had incautiously left the feet uncovered.

The Countess Blanche gave them a quick glance. "Ah," she cried, "who is this? These are not my daughter's feet," and with a sudden twitch she threw the draperies of the couch aside and looked into the frightened yet angry face of her niece, Aliste.

"Aliste! thou!" she exclaimed. "Then where is Bertha? What have ye done among you with my daughter—my Bertha? Soho there, my lord, my Lord Pepin," she called, "what mockery or murder is here!" and as the lord mayor came hurrying into the apartment the now aroused and anxious mother caught his mantle and sunk to her knees. "O, hast thou killed my child, my child Bertha?" she moaned. Then springing to her feet, she faced him fiercely. "Monster, murderer," she cried, "where is my daughter Bertha?"

"Nay, madam, my mother," said the Lord Pepin, "calm thyself, for surely thou art mad. There lies thy daughter and my wife—the Lady Bertha."

"That!" and the countess cast on the false Lady Bertha, a glance of contempt. "That is not my daughter; that is my vassal-maiden; that is my daughter's tire-woman. That is Aliste!"

"What trickery is here," cried the now startled

lord mayor. "Who art thou girl? speak, ere I slay thee."

And Aliste thus confronted with exposure, lost her customary effrontery and falling at the feet of the Lord Pepin, she cried :

"Pardon and mercy, my lord. My mother and father did bid me do it. I am not the Lady Bertha. I am her vassal-maiden and her cousin. I am Aliste."

The men of France, in the Lady Bertha's day, were as yet scarce more than half civilized—unforgiving and brutal, quick to anger and quicker to revenge. That very day, so the record says, Aliste was hurried off to a convent cell, never again to see the light of the outer world. And the guilty Tybers, the Obgraf, with his no less guilty wife, Margiste, were burned alive by order of the enraged lord mayor.

But all this did not bring the Lady Bertha back. For, though Morent, the *litus* of Tybers, confessed that he had not the heart to kill so fair a maid as he had been commanded, the great forest of Mans was searched to no purpose. The Lady Bertha could not be found. And for a very good reason. Who could expect to find in the serving-maid of a poor forester's wife the bride of a great prince?

But from that day the Lord Pepin followed the chase only in the forest of Mans and became stern

and silent, mourning for the bride he had thus won and lost.

One day, deep in the heart of the forest, the lord mayor had tracked and brought to bay a great wild boar—one of those huge, gray-backed, ugly-tusked brutes that, in those days especially, were strong and ferocious, and accounted as game worthy the stoutest heart and the strongest spear. Fighting the beast on foot, as was the hunter's custom, the lord mayor had long since become separated from his attendants, and now held the boar at bay at the foot of one of the wayside crosses that in olden times marked many a cross-road in forest or moorland, silent reminders of some tragic death or some act of piety.

It had been a hard and stubborn chase and, though wary of eye and firm of foot, the princely hunter felt that he had met his match. With bristling back and savage roar, the big boar gave a last charge, and the heavy spear, skilfully aimed, pierced the tough, gray hide, and dealt a ghastly death-wound. But even in the final agony of rage and pain, the brute turned with a sullen snap upon his conqueror, the haft of the great boar-spear broke in two and the next instant pig and prince came to earth together.

The boar died as it dropped; the heavy carcass fell across the prostrate hunter, pinning him to the

earth ; and, spent with exertion and dazed by his fall, the lord mayor lay as in a swoon, almost smothered by the weight that held him prisoner.

An exclamation of surprise aroused him, and, opening his eyes, he saw bending above him the fair face of a young girl. The next instant a pair of stout but shapely arms were tugging at the dead boar to drag it from the hunter, while the imprisoned man helped as much as he could. But the dead boar was a heavy weight and would not budge. Then the sturdy girl, placing one foot against the brute's side, with a mighty effort pushed the huge carcass from off the fallen hunter.

The lord mayor staggered up as the weight rolled from him, but even as he did so he caught sight of the forest maiden's feet, and saw that the foot which had pushed the boar away was much larger than the other. He looked up in amazement at the face of this tall and strong and fair deliverer. She, too, remembered the short stature and rugged but not unkindly face of the man she had been told to fear. The recognition was mutual.

“ Bertha ! My lost Bertha ! ” cried the prince.

“ My Lord Pepin ! ” said the girl, and dropped on her knees before him.

The sequel to this singular story—which reads almost like a fairy tale—is soon told. Explanation

followed recognition, and happiness succeeded to explanation. Ere long the Lord Pepin and his new-found bride were speeding back to Paris, leaving the worthy Simon, the forester, and his good wife, Hilda, surprised and overjoyed at this strange recovery, and well rewarded for their hospitality and kindness of heart.

The news travelled through the land and the Castle of Laon rang with joyful acclamations. Ere another week had passed the marriage of Pepin and Bertha was celebrated with all the lavish though coarse magnificence of the time, and the shouts of "hail" and "welcome" to the bride of the lord Pepin that rang through the palace were redoubled when, standing before the royal throne in the palace of the kings, the *major domus* introduced his bride to the assembled seigniors and barons of the realm as Bertrada, Queen of the Franks.

The act of usurpation long contemplated by Pepin and desired by the nobles of the kingdom was thus consummated. The weak and unworthy King Childeric III., with hair cut short and kingly dress removed, was sent to end his days in the seclusion of a distant monastery, and the line of the Merovingian kings of France came to an end.

But to them succeeded by this act of Pepin the mayor the notable line of the Carlovingian kings—

a royal family that for over two and a half centuries sat upon the throne of France, and ruled the great empire of the Franks.

The Lady Bertha proved a wise and worthy queen, a fitting consort to an equally wise and worthy king. For Pepin *le bref* proved both just and victorious. His name, indeed, would stand among the highest of the kings of France, were it not overshadowed by the more warlike deeds of his father, Charles Martel, and the greater power and magnificence of his famous son, Charlemagne. As it is, the name and fame of Pepin *le bref*, one of the ablest kings of France, is lost in the greater name and fame of his famous father and his still more famous son.

But for many and many a year, in romance, in legend, and in song, the name of the wife of Pepin, and the mother of Charlemagne has been a favorite and familiar one in every French and German nursery. The Queen Bertrada of French history has come down to us, noted not so much for her proud position as Queen of France, as for that tell-tale foot that nearly brought her to grief and then saved her from it, and that through all these centuries has given to her the name by which she is best known—*Bertha au grand pied*—Bertha with the Big Foot.



V.

“THE REDE OF THE ELVES.”

(*A Story of the Days of Alfred the Atheling.*)

[A.D. 856.]



THERE was trouble and confusion in the realm of Ethelwulf, king of the West Saxons and lord of all England. Kent was in revolt; Mercia was in open rebellion, and in all the southern kingdom, from the gates of Winchester to the Marches of Wales, there was grumbling and plotting and treason. And all because of two children—a boy of eight and a girl of twelve.

As one reads history it is surprising to note how often boys and girls will be found to have been at the bottom of the world's troubles—especially if they have been princes or princesses. Here, now, was old King Ethelwulf. For twenty years he had ruled as lord of all England, and king in especial of

that southern portion known in the old Saxon days as Wessex. And now, in this year of grace 856, because of a boy of eight and a girl of twelve, this old king who had passed his sixtieth birthday was in a sorry strait.

The boy was the youngest and best beloved of his five sturdy Saxon sons—Alfred the Atheling, or young prince; the girl was his little flax-haired French wife, Judith, the daughter of his friend and ally, Charles, king of France, sometimes called “the Bald,” and great-granddaughter of the mighty Emperor Charlemagne.

Now it happened that in the year 856 King Ethelwulf of England had gone upon a pilgrimage to Rome; and there the Pope, Leo the Fourth, had taken such a fancy to this brave, bright-faced, and reverent little English lad that he had made him, what was then known as “bishop-son,” or god-child, and, further, had “hallowed” or anointed him as the future king of the West Saxons.

Bad news always travels fast, and you may be sure that the report of this preference of Pope Leo for the little Atheling was not long in speeding over-sea to England. And in England there were four other sons of King Ethelwulf, who thought they had each a much better right to the throne of Wessex, after their father’s death, than had this youngest of all his sons.

“His name is Alfred,” * they said. “Rede of the elves is he; for surely this fairy’s council-man hath bewitched with his spells both our foolish old father and our lord the Pope.” And it would have gone hard with poor little Alfred, in those days of superstition and belief in witchcraft, had his angry elder brothers been able to lay hands upon him.

And so, forthwith, the three elder sons of King Ethelwulf—the Athelings Ethelbald, Ethelbert, and Ethelred—rose in rebellion against their father, the king, demanding their rights to the succession.

But, before all this was done, King Ethelwulf and little Alfred were homeward bound, from Rome. And on their way they stopped awhile at Paris, as guests of the French king, Charles, called “the Bald.” And, at Paris, for some reason or other not readily understood—though it was doubtless a political one, and because of a desire for the friendship and alliance of the French king against the common enemy of the two kingdoms, the Danish pirates of the north—King Ethelwulf obtained from King Charles the little Princess Judith, as his wife.

The Princess Judith was a very beautiful and a

* Alfred in Saxon, is Ælfred, or Ælf-ræde, “the rede of the elves,”—that is the councillor of the elves or fairies. There have been those who tried to translate Alfred to mean “all peace,” but there is no question as to the meaning of the great king’s name as “the rede of the elves”—“the fairies’ council-man.”



very clever girl, but she had scarce outgrown the queer little French dolls that the queer little French girls of those far-off days used to play with. She was, in fact, scarcely twelve years old. This was bad enough; but when it is known that old King Ethelwulf had another wife at home—the good queen, Osburh, daughter of the Earl Oslac, the royal cup-bearer, and mother to King Ethelwulf's five Saxon sons—and when it is also known that the old king had, in order to wed the little French princess, obtained a “dispensation” from the Pope by which he might “put away” or divorce his old wife at home, we shall not wonder that his eldest sons were very angry at this treatment of their mother and grew still more rebellious.

“It is contrary to the law of Wessex,” they said, “that any woman shall be crowned queen of the West Saxons. Even our own good mother is not a crownéd queen, and we will not have this baby girl from France to sit upon the throne of Wessex.”

So you now can see how a boy of eight and a girl of twelve were at the bottom of all the trouble and turmoil in England.

And, at last, back to England they came. But in England the cry was all against them, and only the stout Earl Ealher of Kent, and the good Bishop Swithun of Winchester, with their vassals and fol-

lowers, were loyal to king Ethelwulf. And when he had come into his royal city of Winchester, the old king shut himself up in his castle in sore distress, sick at heart over the turn affairs had taken



"THE OLD KING ETHELWULF WAS
SICK AT HEART."

and greatly puzzled as to what he could do to bring back his rebellious sons and his erring subjects.

And the royal children who had come with him over-sea were also sore perplexed. For, though they were but children, they had seen enough of courts and palaces to know how much trouble and confusion could come to a realm when subjects were rebellious and provinces in revolt.

One morning, within the pointed archways of an upper window in the old castle at Winchester,

this boy and girl sat deep in thought. At last, the little Atheling, looking up from the floor where he sat fondling his pet mastiff Egbert, said to the young queen Judith :

“Would that I had but the fairy gift, little mother, like to Sir Bevis of Hamtoun, that could change my good Egbert here into an armed charger. Then would I, like a gallant knight, ride with my magic spear straight against these rebels of Wessex and make them cry for mercy and for pardon from their lord and father the king. But no,” he added, after a moment’s pause, still stroking the great dog thoughtfully, “that were scarce Christian wishing; for it is, sure, rank heathendom to wish for war-blows between a father and his sons. Would, little mother, that I did but have some fairy spell or salve that would heal all these woful odds and bring us together in love and peace once more.” And the gentle-hearted lad still stroked Egbert’s great head thoughtfully.



“Well then, my Alfred,” said clever young Judith, looking down at the boy, “and why should it not be even as you wish? You have told me that your name of Alfred doth mean the fairy’s council-man;

and, if their council-man, who better should have aid and council from them than you?"

"Nay, nay, little mother," said the lad, soberly, "rede of the elves I may be by name, but it ill becometh the bishop-son of our lord the Pope, to have aught to do with such pagan folk as elf or fay."



Queen Judith laughed a merry laugh. "Why, what a solemn old prayer-man, it is," said she. "Have not the good priests of my father's court for all their long church-robcs and priestly ways told me again and again how to read the riddles and woo the friendship of the fairy folk? Why, then, should not you, my prince, who have the name of their council-man, try some test

of their good-will to you. Mayhap it may save your father's crown."

Curiosity lives in the heart of every boy and girl. And it always grows when it has some mystery to feed on. Alfred the Atheling was a wise little lad and a thoughtful one, but in those old days, when people were swayed more by superstition and

mystery than now, even such a clear-headed little lad as was he had strong faith in the existence and power of elves and fairies, gnomes and pixies.

So, that very night both these royal children set out for the broad meadow-lands below the grim old castle on the search for the mystic circle known as the "Fairy Ring."

They found it at last—one of those "green-four ringlets" that, so Shakspeare tells us,

"These puppets elves do make,"

and which we now know are nothing more than grass-grown mole-tracks, or green mushroom ground.

The moon shone softly down upon the "Fairy Ring" in which, so 't was said, the fairies danced on each full-moon and upon which, so thought the country folk, "whoever shall rest or build shall wonderfully prosper."

Young Alfred, following out the best known rules for all such elfin tests, walked slowly backward three times around the "Fairy Ring," while Judith, with head covered and eyes tightly closed, sang, also three times, slowly and softly :

"Ræd-els,

Ræd-els,

Elf and fay,

Give me the truth without delay.

Fire above,

Fire below,
Light me to all I ask to know."

Then the boy, throwing himself across the grassy ring, lay with ear firmly pressed against the ground and waited for the reply of the elfin oracle.

Every boy and girl knows that if they keep perfectly still, with their thoughts fixed only upon a given subject, some idea or suggestion bearing upon the matter desired will come into their minds. This is one of the secrets of what is called nowadays "mind reading," and this, too, has been the secret of many of the mysterious oracles and superstitions of the past, unexplained and therefore not understood.

And so it came to pass that, as the little Atheling lay curled up across that "Fairy Ring," with all his desires and thoughts fixed upon the questions he had asked the elves, two suggestions of answers kept framing themselves in his mind.

But the sprightly young Judith, impatient of all this silence and delay, grew restless and uncomfortable in the chill night air of the meadows.

"Well, well, my Alfred," she cried at last, "do you hear nothing yet? Surely, ere this, the elf-horses should be tramping about beneath you and the counsel of the elves should come to your ears."

"I do but hear the grass grow and the crickets chirp, little mother," replied the lad, thus inter-

preting the faint sounds that run through the still meadow grass at night. "And, indeed, I can think of naught save these two riddles all the time :

" ' *What is law in Wessex is not law in Kent.* ' "

" ' *Half a loaf is better than no bread.* ' "

"Why, that must be the fairies' answer then, my Alfred," said clever young Judith, clapping her hands with delight, "for they do always speak in riddles. Let us take their answer to good Bishop Swithun straight, and mayhap that holy man may read it rightly for us."

So off to Bishop Swithun they posted, and when they had confessed to him their tampering with such pagan things as elves and fairy rings, they told him of the fairies' answer and begged him to unravel it for them.

"Surely therein doth Holy Writ say true," the good bishop cried, "when it doth declare that 'out of the mouths of babes hath the Lord ordained strength that He mightest still the enemy and the avenger.' I do see in this your riddle of the elves a way out of all this trouble that doth distress the land. Let us to the king."

So to King Ethelwulf they went. And when the Bishop Swithun had told him of the test and the reply, he added : "Even so, lord king, doth wise advice come from these gentle ones :

“ ‘ *What is law in Wessex is not law in Kent.* ’ ”

“ ‘ *Half a loaf is better than no bread.* ’ ”

See you not the wisdom of this ? The law that sayeth that no queen shall reign in Wessex is not Kentish law—therefore may the Lady Judith reign as queen in Kent ; and if half a loaf be better than no bread, keep thou the Kent part of the Saxon crown and let the Wessex half go in peace even to him who hath taken it—the Atheling Ethelbald.”

The wisdom of this counsel was at once apparent to the perplexed old king, and he gladly accepted it and acted upon it. “ The Lord hath indeed hid many things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes,” he said as he looked across the queer old table at his much loved son. “ Rede of the Elves art thou indeed, son Alfred,” he added, “ though I doubt not that such sage advice as this of thine cometh not from the pagan elf-folk, but from that heaven above whose child thou art.”

So King Ethelwulf divided his kingdom with his eldest son and received great praise from all ; for when the people saw how trouble was averted and the realm made quiet, at once earl and alderman, thane and thrall praised the greatness and wisdom of their king and became more loyal than ever.

But when two years more had passed, old King Ethelwulf died, and King Ethelbald, his eldest son, in the year 859, succeeded to the reunited thrones



"REDE OF THE ELVES ART THOU."

of Wessex and Kent. And then the *witan* or great council of the kingdom, with the consent of King Ethelbald and his brothers, gave to the boy Alfred the title of *secundarius* or under-king—thus confirming the lad's succession to the throne of England, even as Pope Leo years before had promised and "hallowed."

And, so curious were the ways and customs of those far-off times, it came about that after King Ethelwulf's death, his son, the new King Ethelbald, married the clever young Judith, the widowed queen of fifteen, while young Alfred went again to live with his own mother, the ex-queen Osburh, whom his father Ethelwulf had so wickedly "put away." For the boy was ever loyal and loving to his mother, even while he loved and admired his sprightly young playmate, the child-wife of his father the king.

The years rolled on, Ethelbald the king was dead. So too was King Ethelbert who succeeded him, and now the third of the brothers, Ethelred, ruled as king, while Alfred the Atheling, though yet scarce more than a boy, was "second man" in the kingdom. The fair young Judith, widow of two English kings, was back once more in her native France, as wife to Baldwin, Duke of Flanders, there to become through her descendants the ancestress of William the Conqueror and of the present royal line of England.

And, through all these years, Alfred grew to be a brave and gallant lad—"a glorious young man," thus reads the old manuscript of Brother Simeon of Durham; "beloved of all the people," his friend and chronicler, Bishop Asser, declares; "comely in form, graceful in look, in speech, and in manners." And the chronicler further tells us: "As the stag thirsts for the water, so did he thirst that his inmost soul should be satiated, and his bosom be imbued with heavenly learning. He studied night and day to learn the Saxon poems, and was easy to be taught, industrious in the art of hunting, and incomparable in every perfection."

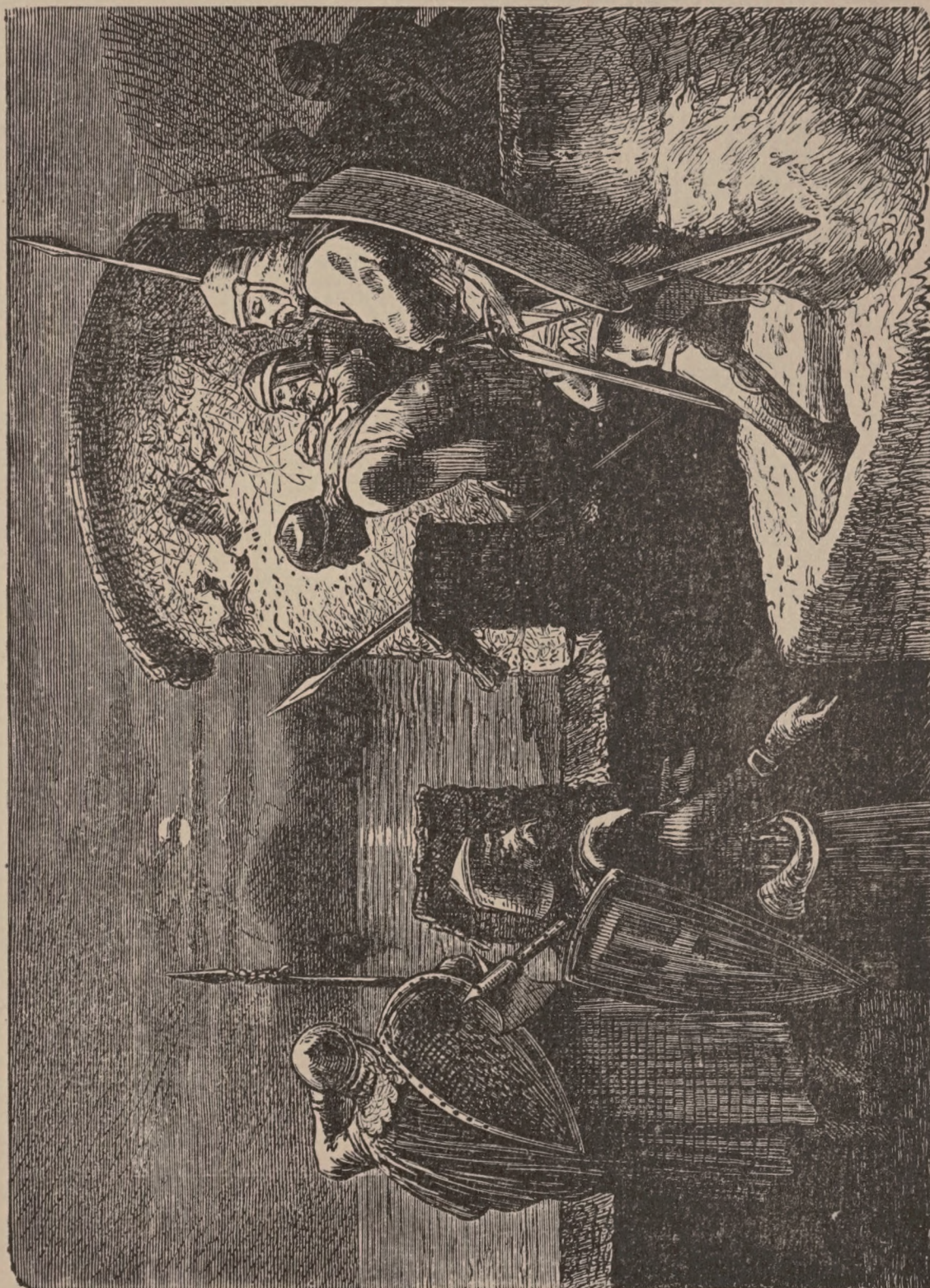


All of which is high praise for any lad; but, to my thinking, one of the grandest things about young Alfred the Atheling seems to have been his complete mastery of himself. For, all through his youth,—his "cnithood," as the old Saxon phrase runs,—at just the time when boys are most ambitious, most impatient of authority, and most desirous of asserting their own power and importance,

this royal lad of a thousand years ago was gentle, unobtrusive, and retiring, even when he was strong and manly. He stood before the world an anointed and acknowledged king, and yet waved his rights in favor of his elder brothers rather than make them his enemies and disturb the realm. Thus grounded and schooled in the noblest of all manly gifts—self-denial, modesty, and kindliness—the lad readily drew to himself the love of all the people, and seemed to them to be, indeed, what his name implied—*ælf-ræde*, the favorite and councilman of the fairies who, so it was believed, watched over and protected him.

One night King Ethelred gave a great feast to his earls and thanes, in his royal palace at Winchester. The low-ceiled hall was heavy with the smoke and smell of the banquet, for as the feasters sat around the oval tables, servants brought in from the kitchen the coarsely-cooked meats, all hot and smoking on the spits, for each guest to cut and carve as it suited him. The big drinking-cups foamed with ale and mead; gleemen sang of love and valor; harpers touched their strings and jugglers played their tricks, while tumbler and jester postured and joked for the amusement and enlivening of the guests.

Suddenly, from the palace gates, comes a noise and stir, and the dull boom of the alarm drum falls upon the ears of the startled revellers. King



THE APPROACH OF THE DANES.

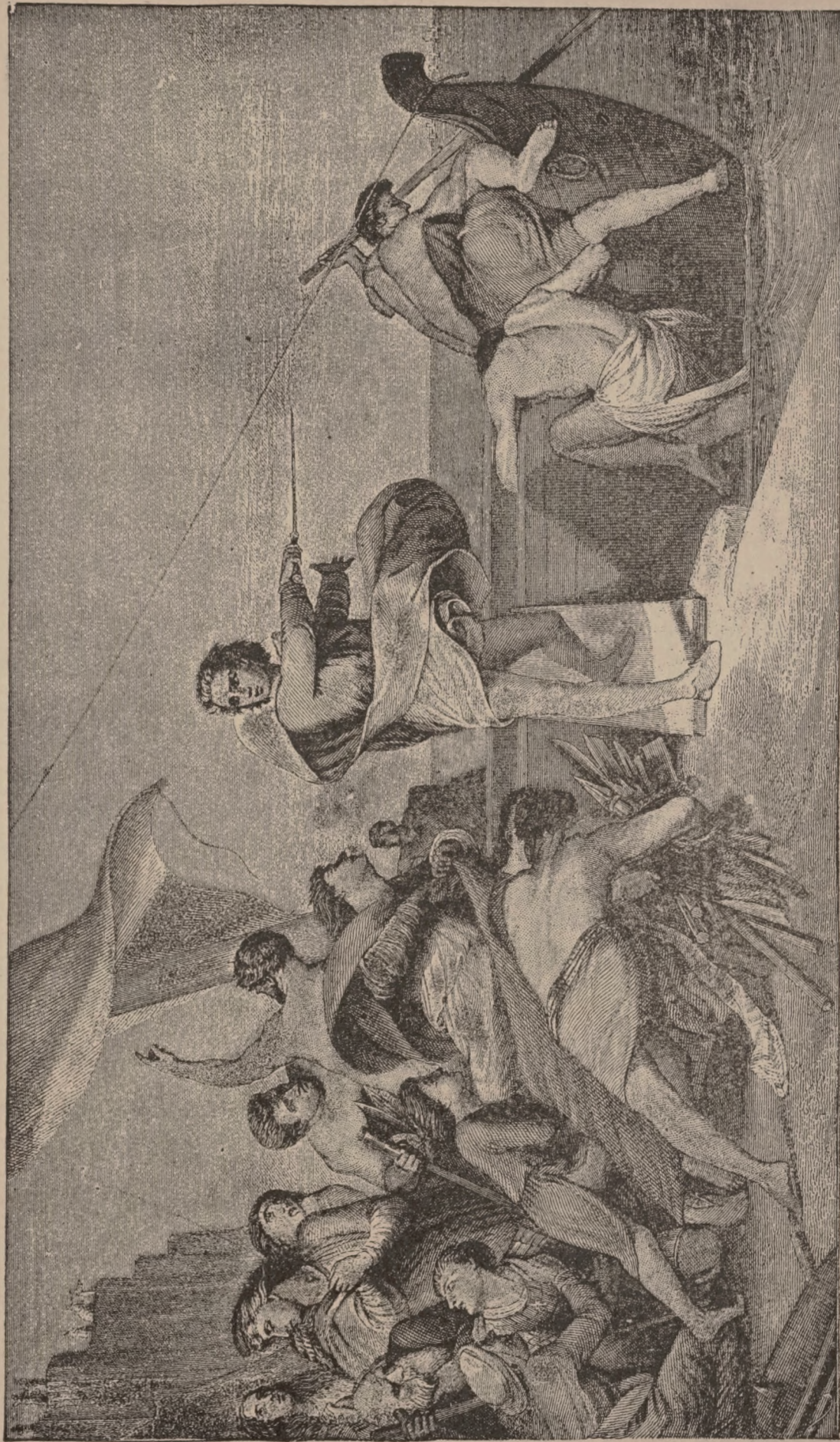
Ethelred, with pale and anxious face, springs to his feet, looking almost unmannish, with his long, flowing ringlets and his parted beard ; the knife-tosser pauses in his dangerous game ; the jester stops his joking and the gleeman his song, and through the doorway enters hurriedly a thane of the palace.

“ Up, up, lord king,” he cried, “ the pagan Danes are at our doors. Ivar the Boneless is in the East, Olaf the Fair in the North, and the dragon ships of the black pirate Hubba have stolen upon Stamfordtown. The beacons are aflame and King Burhred of Mercia sends plea for aid from you, his kinsman and overlord, ere that his land be desolated and his city of Nottingham be lost. See ; here waiteth the king’s runner for your answer to his lord.”

It had come at last. For ten years and more the Danish pirates from the north had been threatening invasion to Wessex, as again and again the high-prowed ships of the Vikings had brought fire and sword to the coast towns of England. And now they were to come in force—cruel, relentless, murderous, and strong. Could they be driven off?

The feast was broken up ; the council assembled, and King Ethelred, uncertain what course to pursue, spoke for inaction and delay.

But while thanes and council-men debated and



115 KING ALFRED INCITING THE ANGLO-SAXONS TO REPEL THE INVASION OF THE DANES A.D. 867.
(From the picture by Benjamin West.)

planned, young Alfred, roused by these tidings of distress, spoke for instant action.

“Our duty is to succor our kinsman and our folk, lord king,” he said; “let us to Nottingham straight and stay these pagan pirates ere they try the passing of the Trent.”

“But who shall say that they may not stay us, my brother?” demanded the cautious king. “Let us rather see first what they seek to do and then may we, by hostage and delay, make test of the Danish power.”

“Who talks of delay when dangers press?” cried indignant Alfred. “A man who is fearful and thinks himself needy or wretched, never fulfils what he longs for, unless he is brave in aiming at what he desires.” *

Young Alfred’s “brilliant valor,” as the old chronicle terms it, carried the day. Earls and thanes echoed his ringing words with their cheers, and a hastily collected army was soon marching toward the north.

The men of Mercia and Wessex, by hurried marches, “made” the passage of the Trent before the war-ships and land-men of the Danish host could push up the river.

Inspired by the young Atheling’s brave example,—for Alfred himself manned the first boat that

* The exact words of the old chronicle of Simeon of Durham.

pushed off to the attack,—the Saxon soldiers, “kindled with fury,” rushed against the Danes and drove them back to their entrenched camp across the river.

Alfred and his men stormed the Danish earth-works but these were too stout to be broken by the inefficient siege-armor of those old days. The impetuous bravery of the young Atheling, however, had its effect, and the Danes, so the record says, “asked peace and truce,” and fell back, baffled, to their winter quarters at York. But the soldiers of Wessex declared that the “fairy guardians” of their brave young Atheling shielded and helped him in his valorous fight.

Three years more passed. Alfred had reached his twenty-first year when, suddenly, there fell upon England a greater host of Danish invaders than had ever yet harassed that fair island. Led on by their kings and jarls, the “pagan pirates” fell upon the English coast towns, burst across the borders of Wessex, drove the fleeing Saxons before them, and, spreading sack and pillage in their path, held all Southern England at their mercy.

Then, on that part of the chalk hills of Berkshire known as the heights of Ashdown, the Saxons turned at bay, and young Alfred vowed to strike one last blow in defence of his home-land.

“King Ethelred,” so the record says, “remained

so long a time in prayer" that the young Atheling, though second in command, could wait no longer, but believing evidently in the old Latin saying *laborare est orare*, he cheered on his men and sprang right at the throat of the victorious foe.

It was a terrible risk for the young prince to take. The odds were all against him ; the Danes held the advantage both in numbers and in position, and they were flushed with victory while the Saxons had all the terror of defeat. But Alfred knew that it was either fight or flight and, upheld by the justice of his cause, "he started up in his valor," so the old record tells us, "and rushed on the assembled multitude of the Danes."

He sees the great Danish war-banner of the Raven floating on the height above ; he sees the hosts of the invader preparing to fall upon him ; he sees his little army ready to fight or to flee as he may direct, and with one last cry for aid to "God and St. Cuthbert," he waves his soldiers forward and, so it is written, charges "like a wild boar up the slope."

The fight raged fierce and hot ; "both sides fought with manly intent," and the "Hill of the Ash" rang with the mingling war-cries of Dane and Englishman. But Alfred's valor was stronger than the Danish battle-axe ; at just the right moment King Ethelred and his men came storming up the



ALFRED AT ASHDOWN.

height ; “ boundless fear took hold upon the Danes ” ; and, utterly defeated, with their leaders dead and thousands of their people slain, the remnant of the invading army “ took to a disgraceful flight.”

So was Wessex saved by the valor of one brave young leader who dared to take a mighty risk and whose name has come down even to our time as that of the young victor of Ashdown.

Two months later, in April 871, King Ethelred died, and Alfred the Atheling, scarce yet twenty-two, “ by God’s permission,” so runs the old chronicle, “ undertook the government of the whole kingdom amid the acclamation of all the people.”

And here our story of the boy Alfred properly ends. The struggles and sorrows, the glories and honors of his later years are those of the man Alfred and fill one of the best-known and most attractive pages of English history. But the story of King Alfred is more than mere history. It yields so grand a lesson of endurance and endeavor, of privation and patience, of untiring energy, and unwavering faith in the final result, that, to read it, must be an inspiration and a help to every boy and to every girl as well.

For eight years he strove and struggled against the Danish invaders, and at last, by the victory of Eddington and the peace of Wedemore, gained the



(From an old English print.)

prize of his constancy and his valor, and earned the title of "the Great."

Then he made England a nation. By just laws and wise methods, by his own high example and spotless life, he welded into one all the varying interests of his island realm, and is known to the world by his proudest title—Alfred the Englishman.

But remember this, boys and girls: Alfred the boy was the forerunner of Alfred the man; Alfred the prince and soldier was the prophecy of Alfred the king, the conqueror, and the statesman.

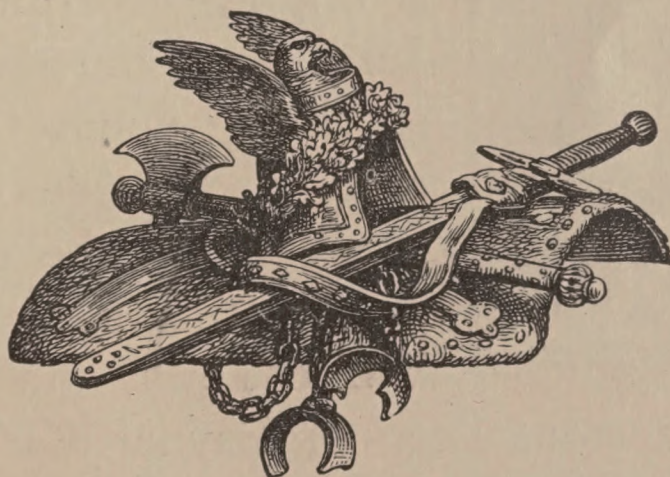
"So long as I have lived," were almost his closing words, "I have striven to live worthily," and the esteem and veneration in which men hold his memory and regard his work show how truly and how faithfully he kept to this noble aim.

Alfred the Great is one of the few men of the past whom it is easy to praise without stint. Mr. Freeman, the most searching and critical of English historians, maintains that Alfred is "the most perfect character in history—a saint without superstition, a scholar without ostentation, a conqueror whose hands were never stained by cruelty."

He, of all men, most deserves the title of "Great"; and the lad whose old Saxon name seemed to promise a life of success, of wisdom, and of excellence—*Ælf-ræde*, "the fairy's council-man"—is worthy the

study and admiration of all who honor nobility of character or kindliness of heart.

“The love which he won a thousand years ago,” says the historian, Green, “has lingered around his name from that day to this. . . . While every other name of those earlier times has all but faded from the recollection of Englishmen, that of Alfred remains familiar to every English child.”



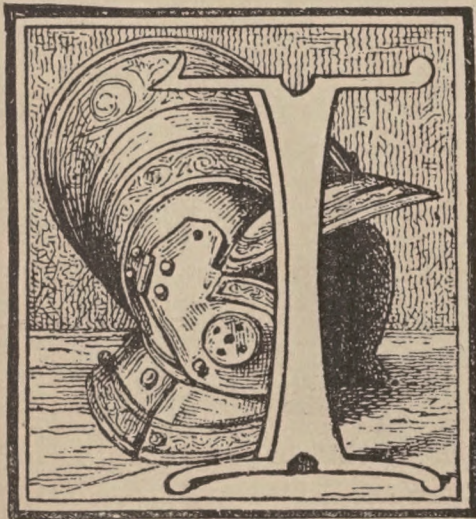


VI

THE BOYS OF BLACKFRIARS.

(A Story of the Days of the Boy-King, Richard of England.)

[A.D., 1381.]



It was June in old England—a bright, beautiful English June, that poured its cheery sunshine upon the queer roofs and gables and long gray walls of the quaint old city, until, from the great White Tower at the eastern limit to the stout keep of Baynarde's Castle at the western end, the London of the year 1381 was aglow with light. And here where the shine was cheeriest, in the historic section known as Blackfriars, close to the western gate, a group of lively and ragged street boys had gathered in admiration around one of their number who was walking before them, not upon his tough

young feet, but upon his even tougher young hands. He was a sturdy though tattered little urchin of fifteen, and plainly the leader of the band of young ragamuffins, who applauded loud and long, as with bare, brown legs wildly waving in air, he performed before them all on the sunny-side of the Blackfriars Wall. But these ragged little tatterdemalions were not gathered under Blackfriars Wall simply to witness this amateur circus performance. They were "laying" for lawyers, as our boy-slang of to-day would express it, though just how it was expressed in the street-boy talk of five hundred years ago, we have no means of knowing. And they were alive to their privileges. It was the great riot year of 1381—the year of the Peasants' Revolt. Death to every lawyer had been decreed by the leaders of the mob, and these ragged young rascals were scouring the streets of old London—on the hunt for any defenceless "man of lawe," whom they might unearth and torment as the representative of that hated class. For the lawyers were supposed to be at the bottom of all the turmoil and trouble then abroad in England.

Turn from your pleasant home-comforts and walk for an hour through the swarming and tenement-crowded regions of Mott or Baxter, or Crosby streets in our own teeming city of New York,

or in similar sections of the great cities of our land. Times have changed but little in all the years of the world's history, and the "wolf-reared children" of old London five hundred years ago differed but slightly from the ragged, saucy, unprincipled street-waifs of to-day; and raggedest, sauciest, shrewdest of all was surely this same Diccon the Japer, or Dick the Joker, as he was nicknamed, who now kicked his heels in air under the very walls of the palace of the Royal Wardrobe—that "good and comely tower for the king's ease and satisfaction," as the old record calls it, built "in the bend of the wall of the Church of the Blackfriars," and within which Richard, the boy-king of England, with his royal mother, his lords, and his councillors, had taken refuge from the storm and sack of the victorious mob.

"Let might help right
And skill help will,
And the Duke and the Deacon
Shall grind in our mill,"

trolled out Diccon the Japer in one of the rude jingles of the day, as with serene satisfaction he turned a double somersault and paraded again before his companions on tough and grimy hands.

But pride goes before a fall, and Diccon's fall speedily came; for with a thwack, thwack, thwack, there descended upon the startled lad a series of

rapid blows dealt with the flat of the sword by the leader of "a loyal band of bills and bows"—John Cavendish of Suffolk, "one of the king's squires," as Froissart, the chronicler, calls him.

"Clear me these beggars straight!" he commanded, and with lowered bills the "loyal band" charged upon the frightened urchins, scattering them left and right. But boys were boys in the fourteenth as in the nineteenth century, and, breaking before this dash of the guard, they halted at a safe distance, and, after the manner of boys disturbed in dubious pranks, they played upon the name of their pursuer and his duties as a waiter on royalty.

"Hey O, Carve and Dish; Carve and Dish!" they shouted; "where 's thy tuck and trencher, Carve and Dish?"

Then racing along the causeway, where now the splendid Thames embankment lifts its massive wall from the river, they dashed into the city and vented their spleen by making contemptuous faces at the gory heads of the murdered Archbishop of Canterbury and Richard Lyon, the tax-commissioner, which, stuck on long pikes, adorned London Bridge. This done they darted off toward Smithfield, singing with gusto the popular rhyme which the "mad priest," John Ball, had made for them :

“ When Adam delv'd and Eve y-span,
Who then was the gentylman ? ”

Soon after this Rout of the Ragamuffins, the gates of the Palace of the Royal Wardrobe swung open wide, and another boy rode through the bright June sunlight, by Blackfriars Wall and along the river causeway. Windows were thronged and children pointed and cheered as the cavalcade passed along through London's crooked streets, and many an anxious citizen and many a cautious good-wife called down blessings upon the head of this royal lad. Spear top and bill-blade, casque and corselet, gleamed in the sun as knights and spearmen rode, a glittering guard, around the boy-king, Richard II. of England. He was a handsome, manly, golden-haired young fellow of sixteen. Right gallantly he rode his favorite white horse, Barbery, and from the tip of his curious long-pointed boot to the great fluted collar at his neck and the streaming white plume in his velvet bonnet, he looked the kingly boy he was—the son of the people's hero, Edward the Black Prince. A shining figure in those far-off days was this fair young monarch of sixteen, and he seems to have merited in some degree the praises of his loyal courtier and chronicler, Richard de Maydstone, who said of him: “ There is not another such youth in the whole world, who, like him, knows



how to rule his kingdom with the wisdom of Solomon."

And, indeed, it needed the wisdom of Solomon to deal with the questions that daily confronted this clever young prince. We all hear much nowadays of the rights and wrongs of the workingman, of communism, of strikes and labor disturbances. They are fruitful of much worry and debate to the wisest heads of our day, who would, if possible, "reconcile the opposing claims of labor and capital." But this reconciliation is no easy task, as soon found this royal lad of five centuries back, when, almost the first of England's kings, he faced the problem that threatened his realm with all its fury of passion and pillage, in the dark days of Wat Tyler's rebellion. The laboring classes, the commons or "villeins" of England, as they were called, after years of tyranny, oppression, and want, had rebelled against the levying of a hated tax, much as did our forefathers in Revolutionary days. Taking up arms against the wealth and power of England, the men of Kent and the men of Essex, the commons of Hertford and the "villeins" of St. Albans, with many "broken men skilled in arms," and other "landless men and sturdy beggars" (so the old record terms them), had banded together under the captainship of determined leaders, and from thorpe and farm, from

town and hamlet, swarmed along either bank of the Thames, and, storming through the city gates, had obtained almost complete possession of the London streets, where now they were burning, ransacking, and overturning.

“What is it ye want?” asked the young king, as, at Mile End, he one day encountered some of his riotous commons.

“No tax, no serfs, and the head of every lawyer in England,” came the stern reply; “for not till these are killed will the land enjoy its old freedom again.”

But uproar and riot are the height of bliss to the street-boys of every age, and the days that terrified nobles and peace-loving citizens, and forced even the young king to seek safety behind stout stone walls, were “high old times” to Diccon the Japer, and the rabble of restless urchins that thronged the heels of the Peasants’ Revolt. And so on this morning of which we write, Saturday, the 15th of June, 1381, these two boys of Blackfriars, the lowest and the highest in the land—Diccon the Japer and Diccon the king—went their ways through the cheery sunshine, the one bent on mischief, the other on mastery. Let the story say with what result.

Along the river causeway and through the city streets to stately Westminster rode the boy-king.

It was the birthday of his father, Edward the Black Prince, the young hero of Crecy, whose memory all the realm held dear, but the fair face of King



"HE HAD WALKED AND THOUGHT."

Richard wore a troubled look, while the spirit of determination gleamed in his eyes. Twice now had the rebellious peasants thwarted his plans for their re-

lief, while the bloody heads on London Bridge and the terror of his lady mother, whom the mob had

insulted and reviled, called for speedy punishment from this spirited young monarch, who cherished the desire to protect the defenceless that every lad of mettle feels, be he prince or ploughboy. In the quiet of the sunlight gardens behind the stout walls of his "Palace of the Wardrobe," young Richard had that very morning walked and thought long and earnestly for so young a lad, and had at last reached a decision how to act toward his rebellious people, no matter how courtier or councillor might advise to the contrary. So, after mass in Westminster, he and his lords rode through the city gates towards the broad plain of "Smoothfield," or Smithfield, now the great cattle-market of London, but then a pleasant suburb of the city, where tilts and tournaments were held, and where the people of old London often gathered in times of pleasure or of popular discontent. Here now the great body of the rebellious commons was massed, and here, where the throng was densest, crowded Diccon the Japer and his lawless young comrades.

"But when shall I have pay for the sixty doublets I furnished thee, good Master Wat?" asked an anxious-faced tailor of a burly, bearded man, carelessly dressed and stern of face, who stood with one hand on the crupper of his big black horse.

"Make thyself easy, Master Doublet-maker,"

said the man with the horse ; “ for as sure as thy name is John Ticle and mine Wat Tyler thou shalt be well paid by this very day’s business,” and Walter the “ tiler ” or blacksmith of Dartford, whom history calls Wat Tyler, turned from the uneasy doublet-maker and looked searchingly toward London.

“ How now, varlets ! ” he broke out angrily as his eye fell upon young Diccon and his companions elbowing through the crowd ; “ where got ye that mass of truck ? ”

The boys stopped short at the sound of his voice, for these exuberant youths stood in great awe of the stout chief of the rebels, whom men called the “ King of the Commons.” They were dragging after them various trumpery bits of spoil—this one a broken pike-staff, that one a tattered bit of brilliant tapestry, another a gilded bridle-rein, and, dropping his boldness before the blacksmith’s searching glance Diccon answered humbly enough, “ Why, from old John of Gaunt’s burnt-up palace, Master Captain.”

The wrath of the leader broke over all bounds.

“ Thou graceless young jangler,” he cried, fetching such a cuff on Diccon’s hard little pate as sent him sprawling to the ground ; “ did I not fling big Joe the carter into the flames for daring to filch a silver tankerd from the sack of old John of

Gaunt's house of the Savoy? And said I not that I would hang any man in chains that dared take aught that was not his own? We burn not for booty but for revenge, and I have a mind to string thee and all thy young jackanapes like so many crows here under the elms of Smithfield. So mind thyself and mend thy ways, for, by my faith, I will not spare thee if ever again I find thee playing the thief and pilferer in my train."

And then Diccon and his fellow-culprits crawled away, realizing as do so many of us in time, that the sweets of victory have not always so jolly a taste as we had looked for.

As they hung, somewhat subdued but still keen-eyed and watchful, upon the edge of the crowd, they spied a glittering company of horsemen moving across the moor toward the camp of the commons. Diccon, as a wide-awake London boy, knew "the king's cognizance" or coat-of-arms, and knew, too, the flowing robes and imposing person of the worshipful William Walworth, fish-monger and lord mayor of London, who had joined the royal escort with

"A loyal band of bills and bows,
Collected from our tallest men of trade."

King and commons were to meet at last, and Diccon scented trouble with the unerring instinct

of every street-boy who knows whenever there is a "row" on hand, though he may be blocks away. So his curiosity got the better of his awe and he edged in toward where the burly blacksmith still stood by the crupper of his big horse.

"Yon rides the king," said Wat Tyler, turning to his men. "Now our day is come. I will go speak with him, but wait ye here and watch my hand. When ye shall see this sign," he continued, giving his right hand a downward sweep, "press ye in and kill every man of his train. But spare the king, on your lives. Hurt him not, for he is yet young, and once in our hands we may do with him as we will and bend the laws to our desires."

Here was news for Diccon. Your real live street-boy may be loyal to his fellows in row and raid, but he never forgets and never forgives an injury. Diccon's head still smarted from Wat Tyler's blow, and, without a second thought as to results, as the blacksmith spurred his horse toward the king's train, away, too, sped Diccon, close at the heels of the big black courser.

Nearer drew the young king's train, and Diccon, slipping around unnoticed in this time of excitement, reached the royal line first and mingled with the archers. They would have driven him off, but he whispered, "Hold me fast, I have word for the king!" So with jeers and jokes they passed him

along to Sir John Newton, a knight of the king's guard. Roughly handled and hustled about, Diccon bore the indignities without a murmur, and to the knight's hasty exclamation, "Well, how now, young ribald?" he answered as hastily, "Look to the captain; watch for Wat Tyler's down stroke. 'T is the sign for the killing of ye all!"

Sir John looked at the boy sharply and then, turning to a spearman, said: "Tie this young varlet to thy saddle-bow, Ellis. We will test his truth." Then he joined the king.

Meanwhile Wat Tyler had approached so closely to the young king that the black horse's head touched the white horse's crupper. Diccon, tied with a stout thong to Ellis' saddle-bow, looked shrewdly at this meeting of the leaders, and, contrasting all the glory of the royal youth with the rough ways and iron hand of his former hero, went over body and soul to the gleam and glitter of the boy-king, not seeing, as should we five hundred years after, that the justice of the cause for which Wat Tyler stood was greater than princely bearing and gilded crest.

The big, burly blacksmith looked down in open contempt upon the golden-haired boy before him. What could a stripling like that, he thought, know of the woes and wants of grown men? He glanced at young Richard's slender guard of barely sixty

horsemen, and then looked confidently upon his own backing of over thirty thousand stalwart countrymen.

“King,” he said, “dost thou see those men?”

“Yes,” replied Richard, quietly, “but why dost thou ask that?”

“Because,” said Wat Tyler, “they are bound to me by vow and by bond to do whatsoever I may ask from them.”

“Very well,” said the king, “I do not object. But so too art thou bound to me as vassal to lord, and I, as thy leader and king, ask thee to obey my word. Disperse this, thy following. Depart from London. Be peaceable and careful, and, on the word of a king, ye shall all have right and justice.”

“A boy’s word is as no word,” said the rebel chief, contemptuously. “’T is not enough, O king. Things will never go well in this our England so long as goods be not in common—so long as ye go in velvets and we in poor cloths—so long as there be gentlemen and villeins.”

“Thou impudent churl,” exclaimed the hot-headed Sir John Newton, pressing forward and laying his hand upon his sword. “How dar’st thou thus address thyself to the king’s highness?”

Wat Tyler turned upon him in a rage.



RICHARD

III

(From an old print.)

“Ha, is it thou, Newton?” he said. “Dost thou forget the forge at Dartford, and how that thou hadst me—me, a freeman of Essex, whipped at the cart’s tail? But ’t is my turn now. Here, give me thy dagger!”

“I will give it thee three inches deep in thy caitiff heart,” hotly replied stout Sir John.

“Give it me, I say,” demanded Wat Tyler, “or, by the mass——” and both Diccon and Sir John looked for the downward signal. But the king, touching the knight’s arm, said quietly: “Give him up thy dagger.”

In much surprise the angry knight looked into the boy’s calm face and hesitated, but the king added in low tones: “Thou knowest my lord of Salisbury’s advice: ‘Fair words and good humor when thou must, or England is a desert.’ Give him thy dagger, Sir John.”

Reluctantly enough the dagger was given up. “Now, my friend,” said the king, “what wantest thou yet?”

Wat Tyler was too deeply stirred by the sight of his old enemy, Sir John Newton, to act with his accustomed coolness; and therein he missed his opportunity. For instead of pressing upon the king the great needs of the people, he put his own quarrel uppermost and sought to humble his old-time master and judge.

“Now, give me thy sword, too,” he demanded, pressing close with dagger in hand to Sir John’s side. But this was too much for the old knight.

“That will I not,” he replied, hotly. “This good sword is the king’s, and not for such as thou to wear. Base rebel that thou art, if but thou and I were alone together, thou hadst not dared speak thus to me for all the gold in England.”

The blacksmith’s swarthy cheek flamed red with bitter rage.

“A black murrain on thee!” he burst out. “By my troth, I will not eat this day till I have thy head!”

In between the angry men pressed the Worshipful William Walworth, Lord Mayor of London. Tall, commanding, and firm of face, there was a moral argument almost in his flowing, civic robes.

“Thou scoundrel,” he said to Wat Tyler, “how dar’st thou thus behave in presence of thy king? It is too impudent for such as thou.”

The blacksmith turned upon his new adversary contemptuously.

“Hollo, is it thou, too, old fish-monger?” he cried. “What mattereth it to thee what I may say or do? So guard thy tongue, or mayhap thy head may glower too on London Bridge alongside that of His late High and Mighty Grace the Archbishop!”

At these brutal words the young king's mettle rose above his desire for peaceful measures.

"This passeth all," he exclaimed. "Lay hands on him!" and Walworth, with a king to back him, said stoutly: "What, then, doth it become a clown like thee to parley with thy natural lord the king? If that thou pay'st not well for such impudence, may I never see the Guildhall again!" and Diccon, still tied to the saddle-bow of Ellis the spearman, almost doubled up with excitement when the lord mayor, as the old record states, "drew a kind of cimeter he wore and struck Tyler such a blow with it as felled him to his horse's feet." At once the "king's squire," John Cavendish, who had chased Diccon and his comrades from before the Blackfriars Wall, leaped from his horse and stabbed the fallen rebel as he lay upon the ground. Once, twice, the murderous steel pierced the unconscious Tyler's back, and then the blacksmith of Dartford, the champion of the people, the "King of the Commons," lay dead before the boy-king of England.

Uproar and commotion, following the first surprise, swayed the leaderless mob, and from thirty thousand throats went up the savage cry: "Kill, kill; they have slain our captain!"

Out of great opportunities great deeds may sometimes come, and, boy though he was, Richard

the king proved equal to the emergency. Nearer pressed the crowd, the bowmen of Kent leading them on. Shafts were strung and bills were lowered threateningly, when suddenly the boy-king shook himself free from the circle of his slender guard and rode boldly up before that bristling line of bows.

“Why all this clamor, my liege men?” he cried with brave young voice. “Are ye displeased at the death of a foul and dastard traitor? *I* am your captain and your king. Follow me!”

At his words a change came over the angry mob. Crowds are fickle, and a living leader has more influence than a dead one. Erect and manly on his white horse Barbery, with the bright June sun gleaming on plume and armor and unsheathed sword, the youthful face and undaunted courage of the fair young prince won the hearts of his rebellious subjects. The uplifted weapons fell harmless to the ground, and as the boy-king wheeled his horse around and rode within the circle of his guard, they all, so says the historian, “followed him with a touching loyalty and trust till he entered the Tower.”

And Diccon the Japer said to Ellis the spearman: “Marry, good sir, saved I not the king’s life right happily?”

“Thou sly-tongued jackanapes!” cried the bluff

old soldier. "Thou crowest bravely for a half-fledged chick. Thou savedst the king's life? Ha, ha, ha! 'T is but by his royal mercy in overlooking such a worm as thou that the king's highness hath saved *thy* life. But come, lad, I'll take thee as my foot-boy, and perchance a good training and a ready lash may make a man of thee." And so, to the envy of his fellows, Diccon the Japer became in time Rick the Courserman and rode to the wars with the king.

"O Richard, O my son," the boy-king's weeping mother is said to have exclaimed as she welcomed him with open arms, "what pain and anguish have I not suffered for thee this day!"

"That do I know, madam," said the lad, "but now rejoice and thank God; for I have this day recovered my heritage which was lost and my realm of England."

Thus, by a happy thought, by a brave front, and a wonderful presence of mind, this boy of sixteen faced a mob of thirty thousand angry men and saved England from riot and from blood. But in our admiration of his courage we must not forget that the people had right and justice on their side, and that the boldness of their stand gave strength to their cause in after-years. For full five centuries their brave leader, Wat Tyler, the blacksmith of Dartford, has been branded as "a seditious and

pestilent fellow," as "a contentious braggart" and "a bad man"; but he seems rather to have been one of the earliest of those patriots of the people whose acts have helped to make England liberal and America free. In the mistaken action by which he lost his life we can see how important it is that a hasty temper and the pride of private grievance should have no place in the heart of one who seeks to direct and lead those who trust to his guidance. Washington triumphed through the strength of character that made him calm alike in victory and defeat. Wat Tyler failed through the weakness that places private wrongs above the public welfare.

The later years of King Richard's life were full of sorrow and disaster, brought about by the obstinacy and love of luxury that he developed as he grew to manhood. But for us there is much to remember and to admire in the unflinching courage in the face of danger and of death, that marks this scene in the early life of Richard Plantagenet, second of the name, the boy-king of England.

This story of young Richard and the rebels at Smithfield comes with fresh interest to us of to-day in the light of recent events. On Saturday, the 6th of May, 1882, the brutal assassination of

Lord Frederick Cavendish, in Phoenix Park, Dublin, filled the civilized world with horror. Before a year had passed the cowardly assassins were run to earth by detectives and informers, and were speedily tried, convicted, sentenced, and punished. Their deed was dastardly, but thus "time brings its own revenges," for this young Lord Cavendish who fell beneath the assassin's knives in Phoenix Park was a lineal descendant of that same John Cavendish of Suffolk, "one of the king's squires," who, on the 15th of June, 1381, stabbed to death Wat Tyler, the blacksmith, as he lay helpless before the Abbey Church at Smithfield. It is always an unmanly deed to strike a fallen foe, but history must tell of unmanly acts as well as noble doings. Knighted by the hand of the boy-king the "gentleman assassin" arose Sir John Cavendish, rewarded for his slaughter of a defenceless man by a title and an estate, and became thus the founder of the princely family of Devonshire, now one of the proudest in the peerage of England.

But, notwithstanding those unknightly deeds that, quite as forcibly as the chivalric ones, link the centuries together, there is to be found so much of interest in this story of the boys of Blackfriars, that it cannot, it seems, be more appropriately concluded than with this closing verse of the ballad which the poet Chaucer, "the father of Eng-

lish verse," addressed to Richard the boy-king five hundred years ago :

“ O Prince, desire to be honorable ;
Cherish thy folk and hate extortion ;
Suffer nothing that may be reprov-able
To thine estate, done in thy reign.
Show forth the sword of castigation ;
Fear God, do law, love truth and worthiness,
And wed thy folk again to steadfastness.”





VII.

THE CLOISTER OF THE SEVEN GATES.

(A Story of Old Servia, and how Paul and his Sisters saw the White Vila of the Fountain.)

[A.D., 1389.]

THREE children were swinging and swaying upon the bending branches of a stout Vistula cherry-tree—clinging and swinging and swaying there with shouts and laughter, in the same jolly way that you and I have swung, many a time, from the over-hanging limbs of some springy willow or fragrant apple-tree in our own American meadows. But these noisy swingers were not Americans. They were the children of an old race and of a far-off day. Strong-limbed, fair-haired, blue-eyed, Paul and his two sisters—Rosa and Mira—were children of Servia, natives of that slightly known but most interesting section of Eastern Europe whose plains and passes and wooded hill-slopes have echoed the war-cries of Roman and Byzantine, of Barbarian and Turkish conquerors from distant ages until

now. Take your atlas and turn to the map of Turkey in Europe, follow the winding course of the "beautiful blue Danube" until you reach Belgrade, and there, stretching to the east and south, ribbed with mountain ranges and crossed by several rivers, is the old kingdom of Servia, the country where, on a verdant hill-slope, near to the ancient city of Karanovatz, on a bright June morning away back in the year 1389, Paul and his two sisters were swinging merrily on the lower branches of their favorite cherry-tree, or, as they called it, their *vishnia*. As thus they swung, they could catch glimpses now and then, across the dark-green fir-tops, of the tall, gray towers of the royal palace of King Lazarus, from which floated the imperial banner of the double eagle, and of the ivy-covered walls of the old monastery of Siczi, "the Cloister of the Seven Gates." And well they knew, simple children though they were, the stirring stories of Servian valor and of Servia's greatness. Often had they heard, both at the meetings of the grave elders, and from gray old Ivan the bard, as he sang to the music of the rude guitar, or *gusle*, how the palace was built in the early days of the kings; how from it had marched to victory the royal Stephen, the mighty Tzar, whose flag had floated over many a battle-field, until the power of Servia was acknowledged from the white walls of Belgrade to

the azure waters of the Grecian seas ; how, in the holy cloister of Siczi, each new king of the line of Stephen had been crowned with the “ diadem of Dushan,” and, sword in hand, had issued from the cloister as king of Servia, through a new door cut for his special exit in the ivy-covered wall ; and how, now, seven gates for seven kings had thus been cut, and the noble Lazarus ruled as the seventh king of Servia in his palace at Karanovatz. All this they knew, for they were Servian children—proud of the old tales and legends told at the fireside, and dearly loving the green hills and fertile valleys of Servia, and, best of all, the waving forests that circled and shadowed their own Servian home.

And, as they swung, now high, now low, they played at their game of king and queen, singing the song known to every boy and girl of Servia. It was thus that Paul sang to Rosa :

“ The king from the queen an answer craves :
How shall we now employ our slaves ? ”

And Rosa answered :

“ The maidens in fine embroidery,
The widows to spin flax-yarn for me,
And the men to dig in the fields for me.”

Then Paul sang to Mira :

“The king from the queen an answer craves :
How shall we, lady, feed our slaves ?”

And Mira replied :

“The maidens shall have the honey-comb sweet,
The widows shall feed on the finest wheat,
And the men of maize-meal bread shall eat.”

But just as they were about to sing the next verse, in which the king asks :

“Where for the night shall rest our slaves ?”

they heard a shout and a rustle, and Mira's pretty, dappled fawnkin, Lado, all timid and trembling, came flying to the children for safety and protection ; and almost before Mira and Rosa could calm the frightened creature, and Paul, snatching up a stout cherry-branch, could stand on guard, a swooping falcon darted down at poor Lado's head. The girls screamed, and shook their silken jackets at the fierce bird ; but Paul, swinging his cherry-stick, struck the bird on its sleek gray neck, and stretched it, a dead falcon, at his feet.

“O Paul, Paul ! O Lado, Lado !” cried both the girls in mingled joy and fear, as they stroked their rescued pet and trembled for Paul's safety ; for he had killed, perhaps, one of the royal falcons.

They were not kept long in suspense, for there came galloping up to them, mounted on a swift

Wallachian pony, a stout-built youth of some sixteen years, richly dressed, his long, yellow hair streaming out from under his scarlet cap.

“O Paul, run! Run, dear Paul!” moaned Rosa. “It is the young *ban*!”

Then Paul knew that he had killed the falcon of the young prince, or *ban*, Stephen, the son of King Lazarus. But he stood his ground. “I will not run,” he said.

The prince looked at the group, saw the trembling Lado, saw the dead falcon, saw Paul’s stout cherry-stick, and, leaping from his pony, he rushed at the boy, white with rage.

“Thou dog!” he said, striking at Paul with his unstrung bow. “How dar’st thou kill my falcon?”

Paul answered as bravely as will any boy of spirit who has justice on his side and the weak under his protection.

“Strike me not, O Prince!” he said. “I sought not to kill thy falcon, but to drive him off, lest he should tear and blind our fawn.”

“Thou wolf! thou pig! thou dog!” screamed the prince, still furious at his loss; and flinging aside his bow, he grasped his yataghan, or short scimitar, to cut the boy down. Rosa and Mira threw their arms around Paul, but he shook them off, parried the prince’s stroke with his stick, and,

grasping his arm, said : "Take care what thou doest, my prince. My grandfather is Nicholas, one of the king's foresters. 'T will go hard, even with thee, shouldst thou harm or kill me."

"The *vilas* of the forest and the *vilas* of the mountain choke and smother thy grandfather!" said the enraged prince, and he would have struck at Paul again, but just then there came a clatter of horses' hoofs and a gleam of shining armor, and through the trees at full gallop came the prince's uncle, Milosh Obilitch, the chief captain, or *voïvode*, of King Lazarus of Servia, followed by three mounted spearmen. A look of displeasure came into his face as he caught sight of the prince's angry countenance and Paul's defensive attitude.

"Come here, my prince," he said sharply ; "why dost thou loiter there? Even now thy father, the Tzar, is on the march to Kosovo, and waits but for his son."

"I would be even with this vampire though the Turkish Tzar himself was at our palace gates," said the prince, wrathfully, and then he told his side of the story.

"But his falcon would have killed our fawn, O mighty *ban*," said Rosa—"our fawn, Lado, dear to us as life."

The *voïvode* Milosh laughed a mighty laugh.

"Now, by the fist of the Cloud-gatherer," he

swore in roughest Servian, "*ban* I may be, and trusted soldier of the Tzar, but I am no judge either for man or child. Come, we waste words. Get you to horse, my prince. A gallop through Kushaja will cool your hot young head. Fawns and falcons must wait, for 'When the Tzar rides, all business bides.' "

The prince stood in great awe of his mighty uncle. He therefore obeyed his command, though in rebellious silence, and mounted his pony with angry reluctance.

"As for you, little ones," said the *voïvode*, "you, too, must wait for justice with fawns and falcons. Here, Dessimir," he said, turning to one of his spearmen, "take these children to the cloister. Greet the Abbot Brankovicz for me, and bid him give these little ones safe-keeping till I return, God willing, from Kosovo. Then shall the king decide on the right of this affair, for surely I will not. Now, gallop, my prince! To the Turk, to the Turk!"

There is nothing more unlovely and unforgiving than a sulky boy balked of his revenge. The Prince Stephen followed his uncle as commanded, but there were black looks on his face and blacker thoughts in his heart. As for Paul, he was overjoyed at this fortunate end of an unlucky quarrel. He knew the kindly old Abbot Brankovicz, and felt



“‘I AM NO JUDGE FOR EITHER MAN OR CHILD,’ SAID THE VOÏVODE MILOSH.”

that he and his sisters would be safer within the protecting walls of the great cloister than even in the strongest inner chamber of their grandfather Nicholas' house, now shorn of all its men for service against the Turkish invaders. So he took his sisters by the hand, and, following the spearman Desimir, they walked rapidly toward the gates of the old monastery, while Paul, as he looked at the giant form of the *voïvode* Milosh, galloping far in advance, hummed softly to himself a popular Serbian song :

“ ‘ Swaggering surely is no sin,
Fair I face the battle's din,
Laughed old Peter Doitchin,
The burly *ban* of Varadin.”

The good Abbot Brankovicz, who was the superior or head of the cloister, at once understood the children's case, and readily took them under his protection ; but, before they had passed within the outer gate, Paul's eyes rested upon a sight that fired his boyish heart with the chiefest of boyish ambitions—the wish to be a soldier. For there, along the white road that passed through fields of growing maize and under arching forest-trees, the main body of the army of Servia wound over the mountains toward the rocky ridge that overlooked the “field of thrushes”—the fatal field of Kosovo. The fair June sunlight flashed on the

fast vanishing array of steel-capped casques and bristling spears, and, just before the cloister gates, it touched with a glorious gleam the golden corselet of King Lazarus himself, as, with his guards and seigneurs, he rode in the vanguard of his army. Tall, commanding, and gentle-featured, he glanced backward but once to the gray towers of the palace of his queen, and but once to the ivy-grown walls of the Cloister of the Seven Gates, from which in brighter days he had issued as Servia's acknowledged king. The shadow of his dream seemed resting upon him—that dream in which 't is said, the Lord offered him the kingdom of Servia or the kingdom of Heaven—an earthly or a heavenly realm; and the gentle Tzar made the better choice, for he said—so does the legend run—

“What, then, is the earthly worth?
It is but a day,
It passeth away,
And the glory of earth full soon is o'er;
But the glory of God is more and more.”

And, as he looked, Paul saw the gentle king point with his “massy mace of gold” toward his advancing army. Then, bending his head to the priestly benediction, he passed the cloister gates, and, preceded by the gallant young Bocko Yougovitch, bearing the great purple standard of the cross; with his son, the sulky Prince Stephen, riding

at his bridle-hand ; with nobles in golden corselets and gleaming helmets following after ; with stout spearmen, and lusty curtal-axmen, and trusty archers closing the glittering cavalcade ; up the steep slopes of the Scardus, and on toward the distant mountain passes, through the fair June weather, rode Lazarus, the last of the Servian kings to fight for his fatherland against the hosts of the Turkish invaders.

Paul gave a great sigh as the cloister gates shut the inspiring sight from his boyish eyes.

“ O that I were a man and a soldier ! ” he said.

“ Would to St. Sava that you were, little brother ! ” said the patriotic old abbot. “ Servia needs every hand and every heart to guard the crown and save the cross from infidel robbers.”

But childish desires quickly change, as childish hearts quickly open to each new joy, and, through the few days that followed, Paul found no lack of incident to blur the memory of shield and helm and brighten the joys of living pleasures. For the good monks of the monastery, too engrossed in prayers for Servia's safety and in anxious and weary waiting for tidings from the battle to look after three harmless children, suffered them to roam at will, unquestioned and unchecked. So Paul and Rosa and Mira, merry-hearted, and thinking little of a danger still distant, roamed alike through cloister and “ holy forest.” Paul could

recall many of the stories and legends that hovered about the old walls—legends of the saints it shrined and stories of the mighty Tzar who had honored and decorated it. These he could tell, with many boyish embellishments, to his wondering and adoring sisters. Together they knelt before the scarlet altar, or looked with curious awe at the dusty memorials of dead kings or the relics of Servia's saints; together they stood before each of the seven gates in the cloister wall, rehearsing the stories of the kings, while Paul, crowned with maple-leaves and roses, and bearing a white wand of peeled maple, stood in turn under the shadow of each royal gate personating each of the seven kings, while Rosa and Mira wheeled and whirled before him in the fleet figures of the *kolo*, the favorite dance of Servia. When tired of the sunny cloister and the chapel walls, they would wander through the forest paths that, to them, led to fairy-land.

No people in Europe is so greatly given to romance and superstition as are the Servians. But it is an airy and fanciful superstition, full of fairies and angels and lucky signs or unlucky omens. And Paul and his sisters were devoted believers in all the delicious mysteries of their home-land. To them every tree, and stream, and grassy mound had its attendant sprite—its fairy guardian, or *vila*, as they called it; witches and vampires sought to

entrap heedless or wicked children, but would quickly disappear at the sound of a little prayer or at the sign of the holy cross. So they roamed and romanced through the monastery woodlands, seeing fairy forms in every waving bush, and weaving innocent fairy fancies around each sunny grotto and shady nook. But their favorite resort was the old moss-grown fountain close to the cloister walls. Here they would sit for hours under the shade of the mountain maples, watching the bubbling waters and speculating about the Lady of the Fountain—the White Vila of whom they had so often heard in the songs of old Ivan the bard—the White Vila who haunted the holy fountain, and appeared only when Servia's glory or Servia's distress called her forth.

On the fifth day of their stay in the monastery, the 15th of June, 1389, the children came from the cloister woods, where they had been playing at the Fire-festival, Servia's great June festival of St. John. It was a lovely afternoon, and they were wrapped in mystery and fancy, and therefore happy. For Paul had declared that, as he watched while the girls waved their tiny torches, he had thrice seen the sun stand still, as it was said to do on St. John's feast, in honor of that worthy saint. The girls, of course, devoutly believed it too, and now the three approached their favorite maple-tree, singing softly the Servian harvest song :

“Take hold of your reeds, youths and maidens, and see
Who the kissers and kissed of the reapers shall be ;
Take hold of your reeds, till the secret be told,
If the old shall kiss young, and the young shall kiss old.”

But the song died upon their lips as Rosa, suddenly clutching Paul's arm, pointed to the moss-grown fountain, and whispered :

“Oh, Paul ! Paul ! see there !”

Paul looked as directed, and there, under their favorite maple, he saw a white-robed female figure, standing motionless. Her hands were clasped, her eyes were turned toward that part of the cloister where the last of the seven gates, the gate of King Lazarus, pierced the ivy wall.

“Rosa ! Mira !” he exclaimed, under his breath,
“’t is she ! ’t is she—the White Vila !”

The figure raised its clasped hands toward the cloister walls. “O holy Elias ! O saintly Maria ! saintly Sava !” it said, “guard thou the Tzar Lazarus ; save thou the golden crown of Servia from the infidel Turk !”

Now restrained by childish timidity, now drawn on by childish curiosity, Paul and his sisters gradually approached the apparition. Then Paul's curiosity, as is often the case, got the better of his caution. Stretching far forward to hear the Vila's words, he tripped and fell forward. At the sound the figure turned quickly. A beautiful but sorrow-

filled face looked upon the children, and a tear-laden voice asked: "And who are you, O little ones, here in the cloister gardens?"

Rosa and Mira drew back in fear, but Paul answered stoutly enough, though a trifle shakily: "The grandchildren of the good Nicholas, so please you," he said; and then added: "We are here, under safeguard of the holy abbot, for killing the falcon of the young *ban*, Stephen."

"The falcon of Stephen killed!" said the white figure. "Oh, cruel omen!"

"But it would have killed our fawn, O White One!" said trembling Rosa—"our fawn Lado, and Paul struck it down."

"And we wait here till the king's return," said Paul.

"The king's return?" sadly echoed the White One. "Ah, little brother, they who wait longest wait safest."

"But will the king not return?" Paul asked, for the first time feeling that perhaps all the gleam and glitter of that soldierly array might go down in disaster.

"Who shall say?" the figure replied. "This morning, when the dawn was dim, two black ravens, flying from Kosovo, perched upon the palace of the Tzar, and thrice they croaked and thrice they called."



AT KOSOVO.

And Paul, full of Servia's legends and omens, said sadly :

“ When ravens croak and falcons fall,
Low hangs the black cloud over all.”

“ The falcon has fallen, the ravens have croaked, the black cloud hangs low over the Seven Gates. See ! ” said the White One, and she pointed where, across the cloister wall, the heavy shadows lay across the gateways of the kings.

“ But, can you not save Servia, O Lady White Vila ? ” Paul asked, appealingly. “ Old Ivan the bard has sung that the White Vila of the Fountain stands Servia's friend in Servia's need.”

But, before an answer could be made, the cloister gates swung open with a sudden clang, and straight to the holy fountain dashed a black courser, flecked with foam, while on his back swayed a wounded rider—the courier of the Tzar.

“ O Milontine ! ” cried the white lady, rushing toward him. “ The Tzar, the Tzar ? ”

The courier dropped from his saddle and kissed the lady's robe.

“ O true-eyed Queen,” he said, “ the sun of Servia is down ; dead is the great Lazarus ! ”

“ Ah, woe is me ! ” she said ; “ the ravens, the falcon, and the black cloud did but show the truth ! ”

And as her fair head dropped in grief, Paul knew that the White Vila of the Fountain was "the sweet-eyed Melitza," the widowed queen of Servia.

"And my boy Stephen? How died the young *ban*, Milontine?" she asked, raising her head.

The courier hesitated. "Hear the end, O Queen!" he said, and then he told in few but weary words the whole sad tale. He told how gallantly Servia's army met the foe; how bravely young Bocko guarded the purple standard of the cross; how her brother, the *voivode* Milosh, cut his way through twelve thousand Turkish soldiers to where King Lazarus stood at bay, and fought the Turkish sultan himself; how, when they were overpowered by numbers, Milosh and the king still fought until vanquished, and how even at his death-struggle the *voivode's* blade had cut down the sultan too; how the new sultan, Bajazet, in his tent, slew the great Lazarus; and, last of all, how Stephen—her son, the young *ban*, the hope of Servia—had early in the battle deserted to the enemy, told the Turks the secret of Servia's array and the weakest spot in her battle-line, and now, in the tent of the Turkish sultan, saluted him as master and lord.

Calm in face and feature, the queen waited till the last; but when the story of her son's treachery was told, she started to her feet.

"O sacred house!" she said, turning to the

monastery walls, "O Cloister of the Seven Gates ; from out whose holy doors have issued Servia's kings ; at whose sacred altar the holy christening drops fell on my baby Stephen's head, fall now and cover Servia's wretched queen !"

"And doubt ye, doubt ye, the tale I tell ?
Ask of the dead, for the dead know well ;
Let them answer ye, each from his mouldy bed,
For there is no falsehood among the dead ;
And there be twelve thousand dead men know
Who betray'd the Tzar at Kosovo."

So, under the ivy-covered walls of the Cloister of the Seven Gates, swooned the sweet queen of Servia ; so, on the fatal field of Kosovo, fell the noble Lazarus, the last of Servia's kings ; so a traitor son betrayed a kingly father ; so Lado the fawn lost the crown of Servia.

And now, why have I told this story of Servia's sorrow, this tale of a far-off time, and of a land so little known to the boys and girls of to-day—this tale, half fact, half fable, as I have gathered it from the mists of romance that obscure the history of a fair land and of a gallant race ?

Five hundred years have passed since the fatal day of Kosovo ; five centuries since the last of Servia's kings fell, fighting bravely in her defence. Through all these years, with only now and then a gleam of light, a bright but transient flaring-up of

the spirit of liberty, the Turk has ruled as master of the land. But her deliverance at last came. In 1868, when but a boy of fourteen, the young Milan Obrenovitch was acknowledged as tributary prince of Serbia; a young man of twenty-two he, in the year 1876, revolted against Turkish misrule and freed Serbia from the long tyranny of her Moslem conquerors. On the 10th of March, 1882, he was proclaimed king of Serbia, and, following the custom of his ancestors, "bore his crown forth into the world," amid the glad acclaims of an emancipated people, as King Milan the First, passing through a new gate cut in the time-stained, moss-grown wall of the old Cloister of the Seven Gates, under the shadow of which Paul and his sisters saw the White Vila of the Fountain five hundred years ago.

But Serbia's ill-luck seems not yet to have entirely deserted her. For, since that day of deliverance, events have not gone well with the mountain kingdom. Her young monarch and the fiery Prince Alexander of Bulgaria have had a serious falling out that has tested the manliness and the power of each nation. Servian jealousy of Bulgaria and Bulgarian desire for extension have fostered these troubles. In November, 1885, the Servians invaded the territory of Bulgaria and a war was brought on, which only terminated in the triumph of Prince Alexander and the defeat and withdrawal

of King Milan. Since then the two young monarchs have amicably settled their differences and it is to be hoped that both these nations, now freed from the yoke of Turkish vassalage, will live together in peace and harmony, and undisturbed by omens and *vilas*, Turks or tyrants, will emulate in the future the glories of a distant past.





VIII.

THE STORY OF THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD,

*Together with the Doings and Diversions of Master Rauf Bulney and
Mistress Margery Carew.*

I.

HOW RAUF BULNEY SPOILED HIS CRIMSON CLOAK.

IT was a breezy, sunshiny day in the early English spring—the thirteenth of March, 1520. The hills and valleys of Buckinghamshire lay bleak and bare, with but scant signs of the verdure imprisoned beneath. The ancestral oaks that studded the lawn and bordered the roadway before the Hall swayed and shivered in the wind that swept the Chiltern hills and rocked the oaks and beeches of the Aylesbury woods. With jacket thrown carelessly open and doublet disarranged, young Rauf Bulney raced across the roadway towards the falcon-house. His face was all aglow from the exercise that followed his endeavors to teach his fractious hobby, Roland,

to leap the bars, while a reckless enjoyment of the brisk March breezes made him careless alike of a possible throat-distemper and of his customary trim appearance.

Roland had shown so determined a disposition to shirk his duty and refuse the leap, and had arched his shapely neck so repeatedly in protest before the bars that Rauf had satisfied himself with two or three successes and now, boy-like, preferring variety, was on his way to test the merits of the cleanly-made little "lanard," or falcon, that his uncle had recently given him and which he bore upon his wrist. Just as he dashed across the roadway a rider, booted and spurred, passed him at full speed, his black horse flecked with foam, while on breast and back shone out in crimson and gold the well-known badge of his Grace the Cardinal.

A courier from Hampton Court, though no unfrequent visitor at Verney Hall, was still ever an object of interest, and Rauf, weighing in his mind the opposing inducements of courier and falcon, decided for the courier and turned his steps toward the Hall. At the foot of the terrace stood Dick Ricroft, the groom of the stables, holding the courier's horse, that fretted and champed and called for Dick's strongest hand to hold in check.

Rauf wavered—the horse for the moment eclipsed the courier.



THE COURIER OF THE CARDINAL.

"You beauty," he said, admiringly, "let me try a turn with him, Dick?"

"The saints forbid!" interposed the horrified Dick. "Ride one of the Lord Legate's horses, master Rauf? 'T would be as much as all our heads are worth, and I 've no mind to lose mine yet. Besides," he added, as he saw the spirit of rebellion growing in the boy's eyes, "the courserman rides on to Sir John Hampden's on the hill, as soon as he has delivered his message to Sir Rauf and taken a hasty draught."

"To Hampden Manor too? Why, this must be some special mission. What 's afoot, Dick?" questioned the boy.

"Ah, you must needs find that out for yourself, Master Rauf," replied the cautious Dick. "'T is some thing touching the king's Grace and a journey to France."

"To France? O glory!" and the impetuous youth, aflame with a new excitement, bounded up the terrace and dashed into the great wainscoted hall, where, at the middle table, sat the cardinal's courserman—a barley loaf and a "dish of wardens," or baked pears, before him, his face half buried in the great pot of ale with which he was washing down his hasty lunch.

"Well, how now, how now, young hot-head?" came the deep voice of the boy's uncle, and, check-

ing his impatience, Rauf walked slowly up to where near the dais, stood his uncle, Sir Rauf Verney, papers in hand and a perplexed expression on his face.

"What 's astir, sir?" asked young Rauf, with the privilege of a favorite, as he leaned against the dais and glanced into his uncle's face.

"Bide a bit, sir malapert," said his uncle, beneath his voice, and then, as the courier rose from the long table and wiped the ale from his forked beard, he said: "Art refreshed, good master yoeman?"

"Fully so, thanks to your Worship," replied the courserman, "and I must now hasten on to Hampden Manor."

"Say to your master, the lord cardinal," said Sir Rauf, "that the commands of the king's Highness shall have my proper obedience," and, courteously conducted to the door and down the terrace, the courserman sprang to his saddle, doffed his bonnet in adieu, and the black horse sped down the roadway like an arrow.

"Well, Anne?" was all that Sir Rauf said as he came back to the dais and looked to his wife for counsel.

"'T is the king's command and the cardinal's wish. I suppose it must be done," said Lady Anne Verney, smoothing the folds of her satin kirtle.

"'T will cost a pretty peck of angels," said Sir

Rauf, somewhat ruefully, as he stroked his long brown beard.

“But the honor of England and the Verneys, Sir Rauf ——!” interposed the Lady Anne.

“Yes, yes, I know,” said her husband, “needs must when—the king wills, I suppose. But as to my following,” he added, musingly; “‘ten persons well and conveniently apparalled and horsed’”—then, suddenly, “Rauf, boy, would’st like to go to France?”

Respectful silence in the presence of one’s elders was enforced by some thing more than words in those early days, and Rauf, though inwardly chafing at being so long kept in the dark, dared not ask for information. So, when his uncle’s quick question came, the boy as quickly answered with:

“To France? O uncle!—when?”

“That means yes, I suppose. Here, my boy, make test of Master Bolton’s teaching on this paper,” and he handed Rauf a billet on which ran the address:

“To our trusty and well-beloved Sir Rauf Verney, knight.”

Thanks to the careful tuition of Master Bolton, the chaplain at the Hall and a well-furnished scholar from the Oxford schools, Rauf could at least spell out enough of the billet to understand that it was a summons from the Cardinal Wolsey, Lord Chan-

cellor of England, through the hand of Thomas Ruthal, Bishop of Durham, and Secretary of State, commanding "*Sir Rauf Verney to await upon the king's Highness with a following of ten able and seemly persons well and conveniently apparalled and horsed; the same Sir Rauf Verney to appear, as to his degree and honor belongeth, at the camp in the marches of Calais, between Guisnes and Arde, in the month of May, and at the time of meeting between the king's Grace and the French king.*"

All the boyish curiosity, the love of excitement, and the delights of anticipation, that lived in the heart of our young English Rauf of three and a half centuries ago, even as they do in the equally impetuous natures of our English and American boys of to-day, were stirred to their depths as he took in the meaning of the royal summons, and he turned a joyously expectant face to his uncle.

"Yes, yes," responded Sir Rauf Verney, with a smile to his nephew's unasked question. "'T is a royal command and admits of no refusal. And you, Rauf Bulney, page, shall go 'well and conveniently apparalled' as squire to the body in the following of Sir Rauf Verney, knight."

"But just where are Guisnes and Arde, uncle?" queried the boy.

"Tut, tut, lad; shall we jog your truant memory

or Master Bolton's lagging work?" said the knight. "They lie, both, in the marches of Calais, in the valleys between our English town of Calais and the glorious field of Agincourt. This Guisnes is a town and castle in English territory, and Arde is a town and castle in French territory. They stand scarce two leagues removed from each other. Though how these castles will serve for convenient and proper lodgings for the kings' Highnesses passes my fathoming. I mind me that on my last return from Flanders, now two years since, I went with my Lord Fitzwater over the castle of Guisnes and found it wretched enough—its moat dry and weedy, its battlements dismantled, its keep ruinous and crumbling. And as for the French castle, they made equal poor report—the town long since in ruins, the castle desolate and impaired, its fosse choked and useless, its donjon untopped, its walls torn with breaches."

"A sorry place for a royal interview," said Lady Anne, "but will not due care be taken to make them presentable?"

"Trust the lord cardinal for that," replied Sir Rauf. "Where so lavish a hand commands, small doubt is there as to great results. His Grace's courserman tells me that nigh twelve hundred men—masons, bricklayers, carpenters, joiners, sawyers, plasterers, decorators, broiderers, and gold-workers

—have been despatched to Sir John Petchie, the deputy of Calais, under orders to my Lord of Worcester, the commissioners, and the chief artificer.”

“But what is it all for, uncle—this interview between the king’s Highness and the king of France?” asked young Rauf, who with ready ears had drunk in all his uncle’s words. Ignoring Sir Rauf Verney’s long explanation, half politics, half rumor, and all glorification of his liege and king, such as he, born courtier, gallant soldier, and true Englishman, could not help giving, we may confine Rauf’s acquired information to a few words.

Three young men, Henry Tudor, of England, aged twenty-eight, Francis d’Angoulême, of France, aged twenty-five, and Charles von Hapsburg, of Spain, aged nineteen, at that day swayed the destinies of the Christian world as monarchs of their respective countries. The imperial throne of Germany, then known as “the holy Roman Empire,” becoming vacant in 1519 by the death of the Emperor Maximilian, these three young kings, each with distinct but varying claims, asserted their right of election to the vacant throne. On the 18th of June, 1519, the electors of Germany rendered their decision, and the youngest of these three competitors, himself scarcely more than a boy in years, ascended the imperial throne as the Emperor

Charles the Fifth—the mightiest monarch in Christendom. Henry of England, aware of the hopelessness of his claim, had already withdrawn from the contest, but his neighbor, Francis of France, brilliant, chivalric, handsome, and brave, but royally self-willed and impetuous, chafed under his defeat and sought to weaken the power of his successful rival by an alliance between those two inveterate enemies, France and England. Thomas Wolsey, the son of an honest butcher of Ipswich, was now Cardinal Archbishop of York, Legate of the Pope, and Lord Chancellor of England, mighty in influence with his master the king, feared and flattered by all the courts of Europe. He received with approval the propositions of Francis looking to an interview between the kings of France and England, and, gaining the consent of Henry, sought to make this interview such an occasion of splendor and ceremonial as should delight their majesties and gratify his own love of display. By it, too, he hoped to increase his power over both courts, and thus advance him toward the prize he coveted, the throne of the Pope, then the highest attainable dignity in the Church and the world.

To make this royal interview, then, imposing in its ceremonial and splendid in the magnificence of its display, all England and all France labored and lavished, struggled and spent, managed and mort-

gaged, until, as one of the old chroniclers expresses it, "many lords bore thither to the meeting their mills, their forests, and their meadows on their backs."

So much for the political history. To young Rauf Bulney, however, as he watched the preparations that for two months kept the household at Verney Hall in continued bustle and action, the desires of kings and the ambition of cardinals went for but little. For him two realms were excited, two nations disturbed, in order that a fresh and healthy young English boy of fifteen years, Rauf Bulney by name, might go to France in grand style and feast his eyes on glorious sights and royal profusion.

At last the eventful time arrived, and in the early morning hours of Wednesday, the sixteenth of May, 1520, Sir Rauf Verney, with Master Rauf Bulney, his squire, Master Bolton, his chaplain, his color-man, archers, and bill-men—all picked from the very flower of the Verney tenantry, "as tall and hardy men as might be," resplendent in new liveries and displaying the Verney arms,—bade good-bye to Lady Anne and the Hall, and while roadways and forest were sweet with the breath of an English spring, and hawthorns and hedge-rows were vocal with the songs of robin and sky-lark, the Verney following passed over the Chiltern hills and through

pleasant English meadows to London first, and thence on to Dover. Not the least happy in that train was our friend Rauf, with a pardonable pride in the possession of three rich suits and a happy consciousness that he looked quite as nicely as he felt.

At Dover, the straggling, stuffy little seaport town of three hundred years ago, they found a great crowd of nobles and gentlemen with their attendant trains; while the valley of the Dour and the slopes of the chalk hills were white with tents and gay with streamers. Here, by orders of the lord chief marshal, the Earl of Essex, Sir Rauf Verney's following was joined to that of the Earl of Dorset. Sir Rauf himself was ordered to attend the cardinal at the immediate reception of "the elect king of the Romans," otherwise the Emperor Charles the Fifth. For that enterprising young monarch, knowing full well the excessive courtesy and winning manners of the French king, sought to gain an advantage over his rival by a prior meeting with Henry of England. And so, hurrying post-haste from Barcelona, with "only sixty ship and the queen of Arragon," he met the English king at Dover before he had crossed to France.

"Is our king's Grace then so wondrous great that this mighty emperor fain must sue to him?" Rauf asked his uncle when he heard the summons, even

his boyish enthusiasm for his king being unable to fully grasp this wonder of the "Monarch of Christendom" doffing his bonnet to an island prince.

“Ah, my lad,” replied his thoughtful uncle, “the king of the Romans sees far and shrewdly. An alliance between our king’s Highness and him of France would threaten a mighty breach in King Charles’ great dominions. Besides, our noble king of England, so my lord bishop of Worcester writes from Rome, ‘is in great reputation in Christendom,’ and none know this better than the king Catholic. See now, my boy, what kingship does for a man. This young King Charles is scarce four years your elder; but, ah! it’s an old, old head on green shoulders.”

So reasoned the cautious courtier, and so young Rauf accepted it, and, next morning, stood for hours at the door of his lodging to see this boy emperor ride by with the English king on the way to the shrine of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury—“the more to solempne the feast of Pentecost,” says the old chronicle. What Rauf really saw was a spare young man of medium height, with pale face and heavy under jaw, with hooked nose and small, irregular teeth, plainly dressed as compared to the magnificence of England’s kingly king, by whose side he rode. But what Rauf could not see in that quiet face was the deeper purpose that even

then spoke of great possibilities, as fitted the man who for forty years thereafter held an imperial sceptre in an imperious grasp.

Four days passed and then, the emperor's visit over, the king of England with his queen and court—above five thousand persons and nearly three thousand horses,—on the thirty-first of May, crossed from Dover to Calais. Standing in the bow of the “Marye Glorye,” or “Maglory,” one of Miles Gerard's stoutest hoys—a small sloop-rigged vessel used for coasting work,—Rauf watched with interest the embarkation. The white chalk-cliffs of Dover shone in the morning sun, the foam-capped waters of the bay and channel glistened and sparkled, while a host of small craft, bright with pennons and colors, scud before the wind out of Dover harbor, dipping and bobbing over the choppy waves towards the opposite port of Calais. In the midst of the fleet, gay with the fluttering decorations of St. George's Cross, the Tudor dragon and the Tudor rose, sailed the royal transport, the “Katherine Pleasance.”

Just as the “Maglory” rounded in behind the “Katherine,” a sudden puff of wind and a choppy sea drove her hard against the stern of the royal vessel. There was a bump and a vigorous shock, and Rauf saw a young girl, whom he had already noticed as one of a merry group of ladies, topple

over with the shock and fall from the deck of the "Katherine" into the waters beneath. A shriek from the ladies on the king's vessel, a sudden wearing off on the part of the "Maglory," and then, impetuous as ever, as heedless of the consequences as of his satin doublet and his crimson cloak, his gold-



embroidered hose and his boots of Spanish leather, off from the bow of the "Maglory" jumped Master Rauf in aid of the drowning girl. A strong stroke and a ready eye, which much practice in his home streams had given him, stood him well in need. Stout ropes and sturdy arms trailed over the lee of the "Katherine," and the girl and her rescuer were

soon on deck, the one limp and faint from her peril, the other well enough in body but sorely damaged as to his gala dress.

“A trim young gallant and a brave! Whom have we here as the savior of our fair but unsteady maiden?” asked a deep, rich voice, and, looking up, Rauf found himself in the midst of a gayly dressed group of lords and ladies, the chief of whom was a man of tall and commanding appearance, well built and stout almost to heaviness, with pleasant face, with fresh and ruddy countenance, with short, golden beard and kindly smile, the very picture of health, imperiousness, and royal grace—Henry the Eighth, King of England, “the most goodliest prince that ever reigned over the realm of England,” as loyally chronicles quaint old Edward Hall.

The courtier blood of the Verneys lent grace and homage to Rauf’s low obeisance, with which he accompanied his answer to the question of the king.

“I am Rauf Bulney, may it please your Grace; nephew and squire of the body to Sir Rauf Verney, knight, in my Lord of Dorset’s train.”

“Ha! of our old friend Verney’s stock,” said the king. “And do you thus incontinently dive with equal speed to rescue the perishing, even be they not so fair to see as our sweet maiden, Mistress Margery—eh, young sir?”



RAUF AND MARGERY.

Again bending low, Rauf replied to the royal banter :

“ My sponsors have taught me, my Liege, that the true knight showeth due courtesy to all alike.”

“ A right knightly answer, is it not, my lords ?” said Henry, highly pleased. “ And who, pray, after your good uncle and the Lady Anne, may your guiders be, my boy ?”

“ Master Bolton, an Oxford scholar, is our chaplain, your Grace.”

“ Ha ! himself a pupil of our worthy Dean Colet—rest his soul ! One of the new learning too. We have high hopes of the youth of this present England whose sponsors and preceptors are such as yours. But, body of me !” said the king, hastily, as his eye caught the little rills that coursed down Rauf’s shivering but respectful legs, in crimson and violet tides, “ here stand we chattering, and there stand you a-chattering as well. Good Master Cary, take this young springald to our yeoman of the robes and see him suitably appalled. Thereafter will we request the lord cardinal, with due regard to my Lord of Dorset and Sir Rauf, his uncle, to add him to the file of our special pages. He is a right-mannered and well-favored lad.”

Rauf was shrewd courtier enough to make no reply to this promise of advancement, beyond the

customary low bow, and he, therefore, kept quiet as to his extra suits of gay clothing. "He who would rise must needs know when to hold his tongue," his uncle had taught him, and just here seemed the golden opportunity to put this precept to the test.

On deck once more, dressed in a rich suit of crimson and violet, blazoned with the Tudor rose, Rauf received with boyish sheepishness, not unmixed with his native courtesy, the well-spoken thanks of Mistress Margery Carew—a trim and sprightly little lass of near his own age, whose blue velvet gown, with its lining of crimson tinsel, well set off her fair Saxon face. She was the little daughter of Sir Richard Carew, a knight of Surrey, placed by her father among Queen Katherine's gentlewomen, under the protection of Lady Gray.

"And let me tell you, master page," said Lady Gray, as she warmly thanked Rauf for his ready aid, "a sorry loss of a sprightly lass would have fallen upon us had you not so quickly taken to the water."

So, in exchange of pleasant words and compliments, of questions and explanations, the crossing to the French shores was quickly made, and all too soon, as it seemed to Rauf, the ramparts of Calais lay abeam. By high noon all were disembarked and, for the four days following, Calais

blazed with all the semi-splendors of a dress rehearsal. Every available foot of ground around the old city was taken up for lodgings. Tents and huts and temporary booths encircled the walls until, as Rauf said, "it might almost be the time of great King Edward over again."

"And how?" queried Margery.

"Why, so Master Bolton tells me," explained Rauf, "when good King Edward besieged Calais, now nigh two hundred years ago, he built all around its walls, much as we have done, houses and dwelling-places, and encompassed it round about with a new town, in which he vowed to live until Calais should be starved out."

"Our Lady grant that we may not be starved out, though," protested Margery, whom the breezes of the Surrey hills had blessed with a healthy appetite."

"Nay, before we shall starve," said Rauf, "I will, as did King Edward, single out six notable burghers of this town and hold them as hostages for your tortured appetite."

"And I," said gay young Margery, "like the good Queen Philippa, will down on my knees before my lord and beg him to spare the honest burghers' lives."

"Which I will gladly do," retorted Rauf, "provided my lady will ask their lives of me, as also

did the good Queen Philippa, for the sake of the son of the Blessed Mary and for your love of me!" and then they both looked a little sheepish and quickly turned to watch the brilliant passing of Sir Henry Marney and the king's guard.

"A rare and gallant sight, are they not, Margery?" said enthusiastic Rauf.

And a rare and gallant sight in truth were these archers of the king's guard, "two hundred of the tallest and most elect persons, with doublets, hosen, and caps," as the old record states, their red coats rich with "goldsmith's work, and the king's cognizance," the Tudor rose in brodered gold, shining on breast and back, their long-bows of finest English yew slung at the shoulder, and their velvet quivers filled with cloth-yard shafts tipped with brightest feathers.

II.

HOW THE KINGS MET IN THE GOLDEN VALLEY.

For four days Rauf and Margery enjoyed the restless life at Calais, frequently meeting as the queen's household and the king's retinue mingled in the work of preparation, and then, on Monday, the fourth of June, all being ready for the ceremony of the interview, the whole court departed for the appointed ground before the Castle of Guisnes.

A long train of moving color, the royal cortege, wound across the low flat plain known as the marches of Calais, the borderland between English and French territory. Everywhere brilliant costumes and gorgeous trappings met the eye: the glitter of gold, the flash of silver or of burnished steel, the dazzle of jewels, and the wave of countless plumes. With lords and ladies superbly mounted; with high officials and their trains, gay in suits of velvet and gold; with priests and prelates richly gowned; with grooms and yeomen, guards and litter-men, henchmen and footmen, in liveries of scarlet and russet velvet, white and yellow satin, Milan bonnets, and cloth of gold; with great Flemish horses, hung with velvet liveries; with coursers and palfreys gayly caparisoned; with hooded falcons and hounds in leash, the flower of England's nobility following their king and queen swept on towards the grand lodgings that had been prepared for them on the barren fields of Guisnes.

"Prepare yourself for a wondrous sight, Rauf," said his uncle, riding up to the boy as he cantered by the side of the litter in which rode Lady Gray and Margery. "Lord Dorset tells me that so mighty a work has been done by the artificers and pioneers that there is nothing in Rome or Venice to equal the sight."

Just then they gained the crest of an unwooded

ridge, and an exclamation of delighted surprise sprang to the lips of young and old as they looked upon the scene spread out before them. To their right lay the once shabby little town of Guisnes, now royally resplendent with banners and pennons, colored hangings and cloth of gold, its castle so repaired and refitted as to make it almost habitable and certainly picturesque. But, most marvellous of all, there rose upon the castle green the triumph of the architect and the decorator, the wonder of an age which brought to the decorative art the enthusiasm of religion and the luxuriance of an uncurbed fancy.

Imagine a grand palace of stone and brick and wood, its outer walls covered with gayly painted cloth—a palace larger than the New York post-office, more nearly the size perhaps of Memorial Hall, in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia,—its roof bright with gilding, painted in antique pattern. On every side projected oriel (or bay) windows and curious glazed towers, called clerestories, their posts and mullions thickly overlaid with gold. Great castled gates guarded the entrance, their niches filled with gilded statues of warriors and heroes, and, flanking these, rose an embattled tower, pierced with loop-holes and flying the royal arms. From this warlike entrance there rose in gradual ascent to the embowered portals of the palace a

wide walk, or "hall-pace," lined with "images of sore and terrible countenances" gleaming in silvered armor. Over all streamed the royal flags—the red dragon of Cadwallon, the collared greyhound, the white swan, and St. George's crimson cross mingling with the golden blazonings of the Tudor badge of the rose, "large and stately" in every conceivable device. Grouped around and beyond this royal lodging the sun gleamed on the white canvas of nearly 2,800 tents, gay with the fluttering flags, the decorations, arms, and "cognizance" of the lordly occupants. On the palace lawn a great gilt fountain, running three ceaseless streams of claret, spiced wine, and water, freely quenched the thirst of all comers, while facing it four golden lions upheld, on a pillar wreathed with gold, a blind Cupid armed with bow and arrows.

The royal cortege swept down the grassy slope, the embattled gates swung open wide, and, amid the blare of trumpets and the boom of welcoming artillery, Henry the Eighth and his court entered into fairyland.

And fairyland indeed did Rauf and Margery find it as, day after day, they wandered through the marvellous structure, finding ever some new magnificence of decoration, some gilded mystery of rebus or device. They strolled through passages ceiled with white silk and hung with silks and

tapestries and braided cloths, "which showed like bullions of fine burnished gold"; they lingered in chambers and state apartments decorated with panels rich in gold and carving, their ceilings studded with roses frescoed on a field of fine gold; they tested the luxuriance of the chairs and divans of rare Turkish work covered with golden tissue and rich embroidery, and studied with admiring eyes the hangings of silken tapestries and cloth of gold, "of great and marvellous splendor." The children's eyes indeed often wearied of the display and they were not sorry to rest, now and then, from all this magnificence, in the dim corridors of the "winding alley covered with verdure," that connected the palace with the old castle of Guisnes.

"It is more wondrous even than the golden palaces of Morgan le fay and Queen Cinderella, of which my nurse tells," said Margery, during one of these resting spells.

"Never was fairy palace grander. Never was such magnificence," replied the sight-tired Rauf. "Why, even the poorest quarter of it is a habitation fit for a prince."

On the afternoon of their first day at Guisnes they stood as part of a courtly company, while through the embattled gate-way passed, surrounded by a gallant retinue of guards and gentlemen superbly dressed, the one man who was the originator and

the director of all this magnificence—Thomas Wolsey, the cardinal, Lord-Chancellor of England, and legate of the Pope. Mounted upon a barded mule, whose trappings were of crimson velvet, whose headstalls and studs, buckles and stirrups, were of pure gold, rode the lord-cardinal—a heavily built man now nearly fifty years of age, impressive in appearance, handsome in face, eloquent in speech, whose years of power had brought with them an imperious and autocratic manner that displeased his equals, but held the people in awe. He was magnificently dressed in a robe of crimson velvet, heavily figured, over which was drawn a loose vest or “rochet” of the finest lace; upon his head he wore the red cap of a cardinal, with large hanging tassels. As his brilliant retinue, in their rich costumes of scarlet or crimson velvet and cloth of gold, passed down between the fluttering tents, escorting the cardinal to the French camp to announce the arrival of England’s royalty, Rauf, gazing in admiration at the splendid and imposing scene, said to Margery :

“It looks like a great field of gold, does it not, Margery?”

“Say rather of cloth of gold,” said delighted Margery, as with her girlish love of finery and perception of detail, she watched the glittering throng.

The quick ear of the king caught the comments of the children.

“ Well said, well said, little ones ! ” he broke in enthusiastically. “ What say you, my lords,” he continued, returning to his retinue, “ shall we not take advisement from the words of these younglings? Let us know this ground hereafter as the Field of the Cloth of Gold ! ”

And the “ Field of the Cloth of Gold ” it has remained in history to this day.

“ Well, what about the French camp, Roger ? ” asked Rauf that evening, as he met Roger Adamson, formerly falconer at Verney Hall, but now archer of the King’s guard.

Roger put down the silver cup of hippocras with which he was refreshing himself at the golden fountain.

“ Ah ? ” he said, “ a rare sight it was, Master Rauf, though, truth to say, I was feasted so plenteously that I fear I shall never know an appetite again. Two bow-shots from the French camp, which stands across a beggarly little stream, there met us a gallant company of lords and gentlemen and men-at-arms, bravely arrayed. We marched through their files until, after the lord-cardinal had passed, they, too, joined their ranks to ours, and so, on to the French camp.”

“ Are the French lodged as royally as we, Roger ? ” asked Rauf.

“ Ay, fully so, though in different guise. Their camp takes in both the town and Castle of Arde, royally fitted, and, between the castle and the little stream I spoke of, there are nigh five hundred tents, very rich, and covered with bright stuffs, and flags and devices, and cloth of gold.”

“ And the king’s house ? ”

“ The French king’s mightiness is lodged both in the castle and in a great pavilion, of which there is one central tent, and three lesser ones joined to it. They are hung with cloth of gold from crown to base, and on the peak of the centre pavilion is a statue of St. Michael, of great height and magnificence, and all of gold, saving a rich blue mantle powdered with golden *fleur-de-lys*. In his right hand, the image holds a dart, and in his left a mighty shield bearing the arms of France, and all so glistening with gold that one may scarcely look on it.”

“ Well, go on, go on ! ” said impatient Rauf, as the archer paused a moment.

“ Give me breath, give me breath, Master Rauf,” pleaded the good-natured archer. “ Well, when we reached the gates of the king’s lodging, we passed through long files of princes and gentlemen, archers and Swiss halberdiers, all brave in splendid liveries, and then, lo, there comes out to us the French king, bonnet in hand, to greet my lord cardinal.”

“ Bonnet in hand ? ” queried Rauf, incredulously.

“ Ay, bonnet in hand, said I,” protested the archer ; “ bonnet in hand comes the French king to welcome our king’s chancellor. And the trumpets and the hautboys and the clarions sounded out melodiously, while the artillery boomed such a welcome, you could scarce hear aught else. Then, when my lord-cardinal’s grace had dismounted, the French king embraced him joyfully, and they went, with the lords and princes into the king’s pavilion, while, as for me, —well, Master Rauf, I was laid hold upon one side by a French archer, and on the other by a Swiss halberd-man, and though we could fathom naught of each other’s lingo, why we could feast together, and that we did so well and royally, that here am I, back again in camp, with but little stomach, I can tell you, for salted meat and strong beer again ”

“ And I am to go with the king’s train, in two day’s space, so I too can make test of this hospitality,” said Rauf, with glowing anticipations.

The next day witnessed the return visit of the “ harbingers,” or envoys, of the French king, many lords and princes, “ dressed in cloth of gold and well accoutred.” Among them rode the Archbishop of Sens, the Sieur Bonnivet, Admiral of France, and the Lord-Chamberlain, the Sieur Tremouille. They were received with great display, with music and artillery and feasting, and then, on Thursday, the seventh of

June, came the great event, so long looked forward to, the formal meeting between the kings.

“ Oh, if I could but go,” sighed Margery, as she watched the elaborate preparations for the interview.

“ Would that you might go, Margery,” said Rauf, pondering. “ If now I could but strangle one of my brother pages and put you in his place !—There ’s young Sir Hubert Darrell, for instance. He ’s an uncomfortable little comrade, and if I could only buy him off with a meal of pippins and wine as big as his appetite, and smuggle you into his suit of silver brocade and crimson velvet—why, off we would go together to the interview. You would look charming in crimson and silver.”

“ St. Frideswide forbid !” exclaimed the scandalized Margery. “ When I go to a ‘ maskalyne,’ Master Rauf Bulney, I will go honestly, and not in boy’s apparel. Suppose they should surprise me in Sir Hubert’s brocade and velvet ! Then would I be burned like that La Pucelle or Joan of Arc, who essayed the same. My faith, I have no liking for so hot a fire. No, no, Rauf, my day will come when the queen’s ladyship meets the French queen.”

“ Yes, I suppose it is not to be thought of,” said the boy, ruefully, loth to give up his brilliant plan. “ But what a pity you are not a boy, Margery ;—why, no it ’s not, though,” he changed suddenly “ I ’d far

rather have you as you are—what old Rawlie, our minstrel sings :

‘ A mayden fayre
With sonnie hair
All garmented with light ’ ;

and never mind, I shall tell you all about it when I return.”

Later in the afternoon, some two hours before the time of vespers, a gallant train awaited, before the palace gates, the signal for the interview.

“ Boom ! ” went the English culverin from the castle of Guisnes.

“ Boom ! ” responded the great French falcon from the castle of Arde ; and before the echoes died away from the intervening hills, Rauf had taken his place in the royal train, and, the English footmen, step for step, solidly leading the way, the glittering company moved on towards the pavilion in the Val Doré. Preceded by his archers of the guard, in doublets of crimson and scarlet cloaks, blazoned with the Tudor rose, with nobles, and prelates, knights and gentlemen, pages and guards, in richest attire of velvets, and damasks, and cloth of gold, rode King Henry of England, imposing in appearance and royal in mien. He was dressed in a magnificent suit of silver damask, thickly ribbed with cloth of gold, his bonnet studded with jewels and topped with waving plumes. The trappings of his horse were of velvet and cloth of

gold, thickly overlaid with fine gold and mosaic work. Before him rode the old Marquis of Dorset, bearing the sword of state, and behind him came nine henchmen, in cloth of tissue, their horses bright with gold-scaled harness.

On the crest of a small hill overlooking the valley where stood the pavilion, the English retinue halted and saluted with the blare of trumpets and the dip of banners, the French resting on the opposite hill.

"Tarra-tarra-tarra-ta!" sounded the trumpet blast, and down the hills, on either side, swept the French and English provost-marshals to clear the ground, crowding the great masses of people back upon the surrounding hills. Rauf, close in attendance upon the king, saw the looks of anxiety and distrust on the faces of some of the English lords, as they noted the superior numbers of the French retinue.

"Sir," hastily broke in the impetuous Lord Abergavenny, pressing close to the king, "you be my king and sovereign, wherefore, above all, I am bound to show you the truth, and to stay for no one. Look ye to the French party. I know them. I have been among them. They are more in number—ay, double so many as be in your Grace's train."

"Sire," counselled the more discerning Earl of Shrewsbury, "whatever my Lord of Abergavenny sayeth, I myself have been there, too, and, mark me, the Frenchmen be more in fear of you and your



THE MEETING OF THE KINGS.

(From a stained-glass window by Oudinot, of Paris, in the residence of W. K. Vanderbilt, Esq., New York.)

subjects than your subjects be of them. Wherefore, if I were worthy to give counsel, your Grace should march forward."

"So we intend, my lord," said the intrepid Henry. "Trumpeter, sound the advance!" and following the trumpet-call came the old-time "Forward, march!"—the "On afore, my masters!"—from the officers of arms, while in close array the whole company passed on to the position assigned them, midway down the slope.

There was a brief silence, the stillness of expectation, while two nations long divided watched and waited. From the pavilion in the valley below, gleaming with its rich covering of cloth of gold, streamed the flags of France and England. There was a stir, a parting of ranks, and forth from the array of dazzling color, of waving plumes and banners, of scarlet and cloth of gold, down either hill-slope, amid the shouts of spectators and the burst of martial music, "so that there never was such joy," rode the English Henry and the French Francis. Suddenly, each monarch gave his horse the spur, and galloped towards each other, "like two combatants about to engage, but, instead of putting their hands to their swords, each put his hand to his bonnet." With uncovered heads and courteous salutations, still on horseback, they closed in an embrace of welcome; dismounting, they embraced again, and

threw their jewelled bridles to their masters of the horse ; then, arm-in-arm, the two sovereigns entered the gilded pavilion, the people cheered, " the trumpets and other instruments sounded on each side so that it seemed a paradise," the lord-cardinal and Bonnivet, admiral of France, followed their lieges through the portals of the pavilion ; with hearty and repeated salutations of " Bons amys, Francoys et Angloys ! " the two companies intermingled, and the great event so long anticipated and discussed was an accomplished fact.

Our friend Rauf, enthusiastic in his delight at his really being a part of all this grand and gracious display, walked gayly among the broken ranks, and aired his broken French with an impartial and reckless sincerity.

" And what think you they talk of in the pavilion, uncle ? " he asked, as with boyish curiosity he glanced towards the curtained entrance of the tent, now closely guarded by archers and halberd-men.

" Of more than you can fathom, my boy," answered Sir Rauf. " Of treaties and alliances, of possible wars and possible marriages, for there is some talk afloat of a betrothal between our little Princess Mary and the Dauphin of France."

" A marriage ? " echoed incredulous Rauf. " Why, uncle,"—thinking tenderly of Margery—" they are but children ; the Princess Mary is but a baby, and the Dauphin, surely not much older."

"The betrothal of two nations, my boy, is, as you will learn in time, of more moment than the ages of two children. But trust our king's highness," continued his uncle. "He whom the king of the Romans seeks and the king of France sues will not pledge faith and friendship without careful thought."

And Sir Rauf was right. For after nigh twenty days of comradeship, of feasting, and of pageantry, the king of France knew no more of the real intentions of Henry of England than did he before the meeting of the kings in the pavilion of the golden valley.

As, a half hour later, Rauf waited in ready attendance upon King Henry, his sturdy boyhood seemed to have taken the fancy of the French king; for, turning to his brother prince, Francis asked with that easy grace and pleasant manner that won so many to him, "My dear brother and cousin, lend me, I pray you, yon courtly young squire, that I may show our demoiselles of France a worthy sample of your English lads. I will return him well and suitably accompanied before nones to-morrow."

"Why take him thus, fair cousin," responded Henry heartily, "and may his manners prove more to your liking than can his halting French. Comport yourself as though you were hostage for England's youth, sir page," he said to Rauf, "and shame not the teaching of your tutor nor your English home."

So Rauf went to the castle of Arde in the train of the French king, and, on the following day, after his return from his visit, he regaled Margery with the story of what he had seen, and piqued her curiosity with certain sly references to the beauty and graciousness of the French maidens.

“But what manner of man is the great king of France, Rauf?” she asked.

“Oh, a right royal prince,” responded the boy enthusiastically; “as page of honor, I rode close to his stirrup on the way to Arde, and he oft questioned me about my home and my duties and my pets, and—Oh, Margery, he told me how to snare a hare after the French fashion, and how to hood a lanard, wild to fly!”

“Well, never mind that, Rauf—how did he look, what did he do, what did he wear?” asked Margery, more interested in fashions than falcons.

“Oh, I studied him well, believe me, for I knew you would question me. He is tall and well-built, but not so stout as our gracious king; broad in the shoulders and large in the feet, with a brown face and short dark beard, long nose, and bright, blue eyes; haughty, but pleasant; gay and gracious, and, withal, a smile and a voice that make you feel as if you must do as he desires, willy-nilly, and then, Oh, Margery, his dress!”

“Finer than our king’s, Rauf?” asked the girl.

“ Well,” said cautious Rauf, halting between loyalty and admiration, “ not less glorious, believe me. Over a cassock of gold frieze, he wore a splendid mantle of cloth of gold, wonderfully fine in texture, and sprinkled with jewels. The front and sleeves were studded with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and large hanging pearls, while his velvet bonnet was set with precious stones and capped with gallant plumes. Before him marched the Constable of Bourbon, bearing a naked sword, and also his master of the horse, with the state sword of France, powdered with gold *fleur-de-lys*; and at rear and van marched a great company of princes and lords and gentlemen, with archers and men-at-arms, more grandly dressed than I can say.”

“ And what did you at the camp, Rauf? ”

“ Oh, I was most graciously received and royally lodged. The great pavilion of the king is more goodly to see than I can describe. It is as high as a tower, of wonderful breadth; outside, all cloth of gold, and, inside, cloth of gold frieze. The hangings, too, and the furnishings are most marvellous, and the ceiling is like to the blue sky, full of golden stars and all the signs and devices of the heavens.”

“ Well, what more? ” as Rauf paused for breath.

“ Oh, but give me time to think, Margery. Well, after the feast came a wonderful maskalyne, with the French lords in all manner of curious and mirthful

costumes, and the dames and demoiselles—the last in especial—beautiful beyond compare.”

“ Oh, Rauf ! ”

“ Ah, ah ! for French maidens, I mean. There was not one, of course, in all the French camp to go before the fair maid of Surrey—sweeter than the sweet white-thorn blossom on her banks of Thames,” said the gallant Rauf.

“ The blessed St. Valentine spare us,” cried Margery, lifting her pretty arms in mock protest. “ If this comes of your French visiting, master page, the more you stay at home, the better for quiet English maids.”

“ But she seemed to like it nevertheless,” thought Rauf ; for compliments have been just as sweet to hear, and maids have been just as protestingly pleased to listen through all the six thousand years of this gray old world’s pilgrimage.

III.

HOW MARGERY CAREW GOT HER GLITTERING CHAIN.

“ And as I thrust the presse among,
By froward chaynce mine hoode was gone,
Yet for alle that I stayde not long,
Till to the kynge’s lysts I was come,”

trolled out Shurland, the king’s jester, adapting one of Master Lydgate’s ballads to suit the case,

as with Rauf and Roger the archer, he pressed through the crowd of guards, retainers, and sight-seers, on a visit to the field set apart for the tournament. Great preparation had been made for this occasion. The lists were pitched on English ground, on a fairly level ridge, midway between the two camps. Rauf had already received some schooling in jousting, and had even "run at the tilt" in a mild way with Parker, the armorer, at Verney Hall. He found, therefore, much to interest him in the progress of the work which was to make this trial of strength—almost the last of the tourneys—the magnificent pageant that so well became the lavish and chivalric princes, under whose orders it was arranged.

"Forasmuch as God has given the cherished treasure of peace to France and England"—so the "Ordonnance de Tourney" ran—"to prevent idleness and sedition, sixteen gentlemen of name and blood—eight French and eight English—for the honor of God and the love of their ladies, intend to maintain these articles"—and then follow the elaborate rules of the combat.

"Why this fosse, Master Shurland?" asked Rauf as the three crossed a drawbridge and passed within the field, "surely none here would force the lists."

"Why, then, except to keep back those who most desire to see," replied the jester. "Are you so young in statecraft, good page, that you have not yet

learned that whoso wishes the loaf gets the crust, and that he who works the hardest and waits the most patiently to see a triumph, can only view it across a ditch or through a rampart of halberds? ”

Nine hundred feet in length and three hundred and twenty feet across, on ground well and properly prepared, stretched the great lists. The field was an open space, after the English fashion, and not a counter, or double list, as were many French tilts. Around the enclosure ranged high galleries, hung with choicest tapestries, for the privileged spectators, and to the right, in the place of honor, were glazed chambers for the two queens, bright with colored hangings and cloth of gold. At the foot of the lists Rauf stopped in wonder before a mass of gold and color, grouped under a great triumphal arch of velvet and damask and cloth of gold.

“ What can this be ? ” he asked in amazement.

“ This,” said the jester, learned in all heraldic matters, “ is the forest of fallacy, the vegetation of rank ;—and rank enough has it oft proved when planted by unkingly kings, or fostered by unknightly knights. This, young master inexperience, is the knightly ‘ perron ’—the tree of nobility.”

“ Oh, yes, yes, I know it now,” broke in Rauf ; “ ’t is the tree on which will hang the shields of challengers and answerers.”

“ Softly, softly, sir page,” said the jester, “ crowd

not so rudely on this tree of name and blood. See, here twine the royal branches, high above those of baser birth ; here is the hawthorne of our king's highness of England, there the raspberry of him of France."

And a curious combination indeed was this " tree of nobility," covering a space of near one hundred and thirty feet—its trunk a mass of cloth of gold, its foliage of green silk, its flowers and fruit of silver and Venetian gold, while the mock earth in which it was embedded was a great mound of green damask.

Late on that Saturday afternoon came the rival trumpet-peals and there streamed into the lists the royal challengers and their attendant trains of heralds and pursuivants and guards to attach the kingly shields to the hawthorne and the raspberry, in challenge to the field. With much excess of courteous language, but with much dispute, nevertheless, as to which shield should have the highest position, now France's herald and now England's argued and contested. " But finally," says the chronicle, " the king of England caused the French king's arms to be placed on the right and his own on the left, equally high," and so the momentous question was settled.

On the next morning, a fair Sunday in the early June, as Rauf and Margery knelt at mass in the gorgeous chapel attached to the English palace were they at all different from our boys and girls of this

more practical age if their thoughts left the stately service and wandered, in accompaniment to their eyes, about that marvellously magnificent apartment, awed and wondering? For this royal chapel was the great cardinal's peculiar pride. To fitly decorate it he had sent over sea "the best hangings, travers, jewels, images, altars, cloths, etc., that the king has." Thirty-five priests, in robes of cloth of gold powdered with rich red roses and strewn with gold and jewels, assisted by many singing boys and acolytes, conducted the services, whilst everywhere the glitter of gold and jewels, the flash of costliest hangings and rarest decorations, more than regally adorned this royal chapel of a king.

And now Margery's share in the festivities began, for there came that fair Sunday afternoon, "gloriously apparelled" and brilliantly attended, the courtly King Francis, to dine with the queen of England. "And, O Rauf," reported the excited little dame, "he knelt beautifully on the ground, bonnet in hand, and saluted the queen and her ladies. Yes, and he even kissed small little me, and called me a 'fayre damoysele,' sir, and praised my bloom and color, and wished he could transplant so sweet an English flower to the gardens of good Queen Claude."

"All of which you believed, I suppose. O Margery, Margery! take the advisement of one who has mingled much with kings, and—"

“Have done, have done, master impudence,” cried Margery, “and tell us what you saw at Arde.”

And then our young sightseers tried to outvie each other in tales of what they had seen, for Rauf had attended King Henry on his visit to the French queen at Arde. He told of Queen Claude’s diamond-sprinkled robes, of the great golden dinner services, of the feast and of the wonderful side-dishes, which were leopards, and salamanders, and other beasts bearing the French arms ; of the entrance of Montjoy, the French herald, with his great golden goblet and his cry of “Largess to the most high, mighty, and excellent Henry, king of England ; largess, largess !” and of the room where they went after the feast, “adorned with tapestry of cloth of gold, and carpeted with crimson velvet.” All of which Margery capped with equally wonderful tales of English ceremony and French courtliness. And so they supped full of wonders.

The next morning, Rauf was up betimes, eager and anxious for the hour to arrive that should open the tournament.

“Give you good-day, Master Rauf,” said a cheery voice, and, looking over against the great statue of the English archer, which, with bended bow, fronted the castled entrance, Rauf saw his old friend Roger, the archer of the guard. “A fair and rare day for the tilts, if but this wind will down.”

“ And will it not die off, think you, Roger ? ” asked Rauf, anxiously.

The archer eyed the flying scud of clouds rather dubiously—

“ Blow the wind never so fast,
It will lower at last.”

he said, repeating an old English couplet. “ Which is about all the comfort I can give you, Master Rauf, so we must e’en make the best of it. But they say the king’s hignesses will both run at the tilt to-day. Heard you aught of this, Master Rauf ? ”

“ Ay,” said Rauf, proud to be able to disclose state secrets, “ ’t is even so ; as challengers both, they hold the lists against all comers. And whom think you will run the course most valiantly, Roger ? ”

The archer pointed to the significant legend that streamed from the more gigantic archer above him :
“ *He whom I back, wins !* ”

“ Could I make that legend sure,” he said, “ I know full well who would come off victor ; but—

‘ Where all are well mounted and matched,
None knoweth whose pate will be patched.’ ”

“ ’T will be a rare sight, though, will it not,” said Rauf.

“ Ay, and a brave one, too,” said the archer, “ though I may not see all the sport. Twelve fellows of our guard, with twelve of the French king’s archers, guard the entrance to the lists.”

Dinner over, Rauf's and Margery's restless longings changed to active realization, as with banners fluttering and music "sounding most melodiously," on chargers gorgeously trapped, on litters, or in chariots covered with cloths of gold and silver and emblazoned with the royal arms, the king and queen of England passed with a gallant company out of the palace gates and on to the waiting lists. Soon after came the French retinue, "equally glorious." The galleries quickly filled with a great company of richly-dressed lords and ladies from both the camps, while all the hills around were black with the crowds that had flocked from all quarters to the great spectacle. Rauf and Margery both sat in Queen Katherine's gallery, absorbed in watching the glittering trains of knights passing and re-passing in the lists beneath them, or in picking out from the throng the great personages with whose faces they were familiar.

"That is the Constable of Bourbon, Margery; greatest in France, next the king," said Rauf. "And who is that with him? 'T is one of our English knights, but his face is turned away from us."

"*Auctor pretiosa facit*," read Margery, spelling out the legend that was blazoned on the shield of the unknown.

"Why sure, then, 't is the Duke of Buckingham," said Rauf, learned in the knights' emblazonments.



ARMOR OF FRANCIS OF FRANCE.*

* From a window designed by M. Oudinot of Paris, in the house of W. K. Vanderbilt, Esq., New York.

“And see now, as he turns his face this way, it is the Duke indeed,” and then they both looked with admiration at these two knights as they passed: both princes of the blood, both young, chivalric, haughty, and brave; both destined soon to be adjudged traitors to the kings in whose trains they now glittered; both soon to die,—the one by the headsman’s axe on Tower Hill by the command of Henry of England; the other, while gallantly scaling the walls of Rome, in open revolt against Francis of France.

“And that, Margery, is Madame, the queen-mother of France,” said Rauf, pointing to a royal lady, who, in a diamond-circled robe of black velvet, leaned over the gallery-front to return the courteous salutations of the lords of Buckingham and Bourbon. Margery looked with awe at this great lady, Louise of Savoy, whose wish was law to her son, the king of France; the royal lady to whom, years after, the captive king was to send that famous message from the field of his defeat: “Madame, there is nothing in this world left to me but my honor and my life.”

Many other notable persons did the children study in youthful criticism or admiration. Queen Katherine’s plain but not unlovely Spanish face, “not handsome, but very beautiful in complexion,” as wrote the cautious Venetian ambassador, lighted up with something of a smile as she talked with the young Queen

Claude of France, the daughter of the stately house of Valois. Near the queens, too, stood the gay-faced and sprightly maid of sixteen, the Lady Anne Boleyn, before many years to be raised to the dangerous and to her fatal eminence of queen of England.

And while in broken French or through interpreters the ladies in the galleries courteously talked together, down in the lists was the bustle and excitement of preparation. Soon the trumpets sounded and the heralds proclaimed the tournament opened. With volt and demivolt, with charge and thrust, with clash of swords and splintering of lances, the royal challengers, Henry of England and Francis of France, with their supporters, held the lists in friendly combat against the bravest knights of England and of France. For twelve days, save when the wind, as Roger the archer feared, blew too boisterously for the lances to be couched, the jousts continued, intermingled with other sports and feats of strength or skill. In all such contests as they bore a part, the kings of France and England, so says the loyal chronicler, "did marvels, breaking spears eagerly and well acting their challenge of jousts." Between the times of tourney came other frolics, lavish in display and royal in profusion. Wrestling matches and archery contests, dancing, and music, and song, "maskalynes and mummeries" at either camp helped on these joy-

filled days. How greatly Rauf and Margery delighted in all this pleasure and pageantry, let any boy or girl of to-day who passes two blissful hours at some great show, some "Gigantic Aggregation of Wonders" determine; let them consider how much enjoyment is crowded into *their* two hours of spectacle, and then think, calmly if they can, of two weeks of such excitement and display!

Into the lists one bright afternoon thronged the "venans" or "comers," to run a tilt with the "tenans" or "holders." Riding down the field to the "tree of nobility," each knight rang his lance upon the black and gray shield, thus signifying his readiness to joust with the challengers. One English knight, still bolder than the rest—Sir Richard Jerningham, Knight of the King's Chamber—reaching to the top of the "perron," struck with his lance's tip the white and silver shield of the king of France. Then "holders" and "comers" rode the one general course of lance to lance, and this shock over, they fell back, while the single champions rode before the barriers.

"For whom fight you, Sir Richard Jerningham, good knight and true?" demanded Mont St. Michel, the herald of France.

"For the honor of God, the glory of England, and the love of the little lady, Mistress Anne Boleyn—our rose of England blooming at the court of France,"



ARMOR OF HENRY OF ENGLAND.*

* From a window designed by M. Oudinot of Paris, in the house of W. K. Vanderbilt, Esq., New York.

and the gallant Sir Richard bent to his saddle-bow in salute to the fair young maiden whom he thus championed.

“And for whom fight you, Francis, king of France?” demanded the English herald, Garter King-at-arms.

And the kingly knight, not to be outdone in courtesy to the bright young girlhood of England, glanced toward Queen Katherine’s gallery, and made instant answer: “For the honor of God, the glory of France, and the love of the Mistress Margery Carew—the tenderest blossom in the train of our sister of England.”*

Margery’s beaming face, which had been stretched eagerly forward in the excitement of seeing and listening, flushed furiously as she drew back in sudden confusion, while the “Oh” of surprise broke from her parted lips. Then she looked quickly to the lists again, as the shouts of the heralds:

“St. George for England!”

“St. Denis for France!”

rang bravely out, and the trumpets sounded the charge.

With visors closed and lances fully couched, the knights spurred across the field; but, just as they approached the shock, Sir Richard’s horse stumbled slightly and threw his lance out of aim. With knightly courtesy King Francis broke his own couch

* See frontispiece.

and raised his lance upright, and then, with friendly salutations, both knights passed each other without crossing. Turning on the course once more, they galloped across the lists, and with equal speed and with steady aim, "full tilt" they spurred to the shock. Tang; tang! the lances struck and splintered fairly. Sir Richard's stroke met the guard of King Francis' silver shield, while the lance of the king rang full against Sir Richard's pass-guard, or shoulder front. But though Sir Richard struck "like a sturdy and skilful cavalier," the shock of his antagonist was even more effective. For, as the record states, "the French king on his part ran valiantly," Sir Richard's horse fell back with the shock, his rider reeled in the saddle, and, so says the chronicle, "Jernyngham was nearly unhorsed." The broken lance shafts were dropped from the hands of the knights, and the heralds declared Francis, king of France, victor in the tilt.

An hour later Sir Richard came to Queen Katherine's gallery, King Francis accompanying him. Then, in accordance with the rules of the tourney, Sir Richard, as the knight "who was worsted in the combat," with due courtesy and a deep salute, presented to the blushing Margery a beautiful chain of gold, large and glittering, as "the token to the lady in whose service the victor fights." And King Francis, smiling, said :

“And I too must claim my guerdon from this lady mine. Will the fair Margery be our guest at Arde to-night?”

Margery looked to Lady Gray, who said:

“With pleasure, if so it please your highness.”

“And here shall be your trusty squire, our old friend—and yours too, I’ll wager—Master Rauf Bulney,” and the king placed his hand pleasantly on the boy’s shoulder.

So to the French camp at Arde went Rauf and Margery, and there they were feasted “right royally,” and that night, too, as they were preparing for a “maskalyne,” there came up a fierce gale of wind, and the great central pole of the royal pavilion swayed and shivered, bent and broke before the blast, and the mass of painted canvas and cloth of gold, of gilded ornaments and quaint devices, together with the great statue of St. Michael, came down to the ground in a mighty and utter wreck. And the king rejoiced greatly over the safety of all his train, but mostly over his little English guests, who, with the Lady Anne Boleyn, had luckily escaped all harm.

IV.

HOW THE QUEENS DINED WITHOUT EATING.

Early next morning Rauf, who lodged in the *Sieur de Montmorency’s* tent, was awakened by

a touch upon the shoulder, and, opening his eyes, was startled to see the king bending over him.

“Arise, sir page,” said Francis, with a reassuring smile; “I am mightily vexed with all this suspicion and ceremony that, it seems, must needs attend all our interviews with your king, and I am minded to give our brother of England a surprise this morning. None save the Count of Saint Pol and the Sieur de Montmorency accompany me, and you shall help us force the camp.”

Dressing in much wonderment and snatching a hasty bite at a cold pasty, Rauf joined the king and his two companions. With neither guards nor heralds they rode across the valley and up the slopes to Guisnes, through the bright beauty of that early June morning, and “mightily astonished” the English warders gathered on the castle bridge.

“Surrender ye, surrender ye, my brothers, to the might and power of France,” said the king gaily, as he rode among them. “Lead us straight to the chamber of our cousin of England.”

“Sir, he has not yet awakened,” said the bewildered Marlond, the provost. “Pray, your majesty, rest awhile until I summon his Grace the Earl of Essex to conduct you to the king’s highness.”

“Earl me no earl, and king me no kings,” protested Francis laughingly. “I seek to awaken not a king’s highness, but mine own good brother and

comrade, Henry of England ; so, then, on to the chamber, master Bulney," and following Rauf, with the bewildered English officials still in the rear and "sore perplexed," Francis walked rapidly to the door of the king's chamber, knocked, and without further ceremony, walked in.

"Never," says the chronicler, "was man more dumbfounded than King Henry!"

"Brother," he said, "you have done me a better turn than ever man did to another, and you show me the great trust I ought to have in you. I yield myself your prisoner from this moment, and I proffer you my parole. Sir page, my jewelled collar."

Rauf detached from the open casket near the bed a magnificent collar of gold and jewels, worth, it is said, some fifteen thousand angels, or nearly \$40,000 of our money.

"Take this, my brother," said the king ; "take it and wear it this very day for the love of your prisoner, Henry of England."

"Honor for honor, ransom for ransom," said Francis, and detaching from his own dress a bracelet said to be worth thirty thousand angels (nearly \$80,000), "wear this," he said, "for me, and with it wear close to your heart the dear love of your brother, Francis of France."

"Now will I rise and attend you," said Henry ;

and to Rauf he said, "sir page, let our gentlemen of the chamber be called."

"Not so," said Francis, "'t is brother to brother and peer to peer. You shall have none other chamberer than your loving Francis, and as I thus warm your shirt and help you to your dress, may the warmth of our brotherly love melt down all the barriers of suspicion and ceremony that our lords would fain rear between us."

And so with jovial talk and many a merry jest was this memorable and uncommon kingly visit prolonged and enjoyed to the dismay and bewilderment of the ceremonious courtiers of both the camps.

Next day, after the jousts were ended, there was tried a bout between the English wrestlers, and then a match between the archers, in which latter the king of England took a part, "for," says the French chronicler, "he was a marvellous good archer, and a strong, and it was very pleasant to see him." These sports over, the two kings entered the pavilion to rest and refresh themselves. Here Francis, admiring the splendid physique of King Henry, said to him :

"You are mightily well built, brother. Truth to say, the Chevalier Giustinian made no unfair report of you to his master, the Doge of Venice."

"And what said the worthy chevalier?" queried Henry.

“He said,” replied Francis, “that my lord, the king of England, was much handsomer than any monarch in Christendom, very fair and well proportioned, a good musician, a capital horseman, a fine jouster, a hearty hunter, a tireless gamester, a mighty archer, and a royal hand at tennis.”

“Ay, tennis is a royal game,” was Henry’s only comment.

“The chevalier protested,” went on the French king, “that it was the prettiest thing in the world to see you at tennis, with your fair skin glowing through a shirt of the finest texture.”

“Ha! well,” said the flattered Henry, “the Chevalier Giustinian was a courtier-like and wily ambassador, and, you, too, my brother, are, I fear, a sweet-tongued flatterer.”

“Not so, not so,” responded Francis. “I am leal and true comrade to the man, be he king or courser-man, who is as tightly built and as strong in heart as is Henry of England.”

Then it was that Rauf, in astonishment, saw his gracious sovereign seize, with a practised hand, the collar of my lord, the king of France.

“Come, my brother,” said Henry, “let us try a fall.”

With arms entwined around each other’s body in a grip of iron, with feet planted, and with every muscle strained, the royal wrestlers swayed now this

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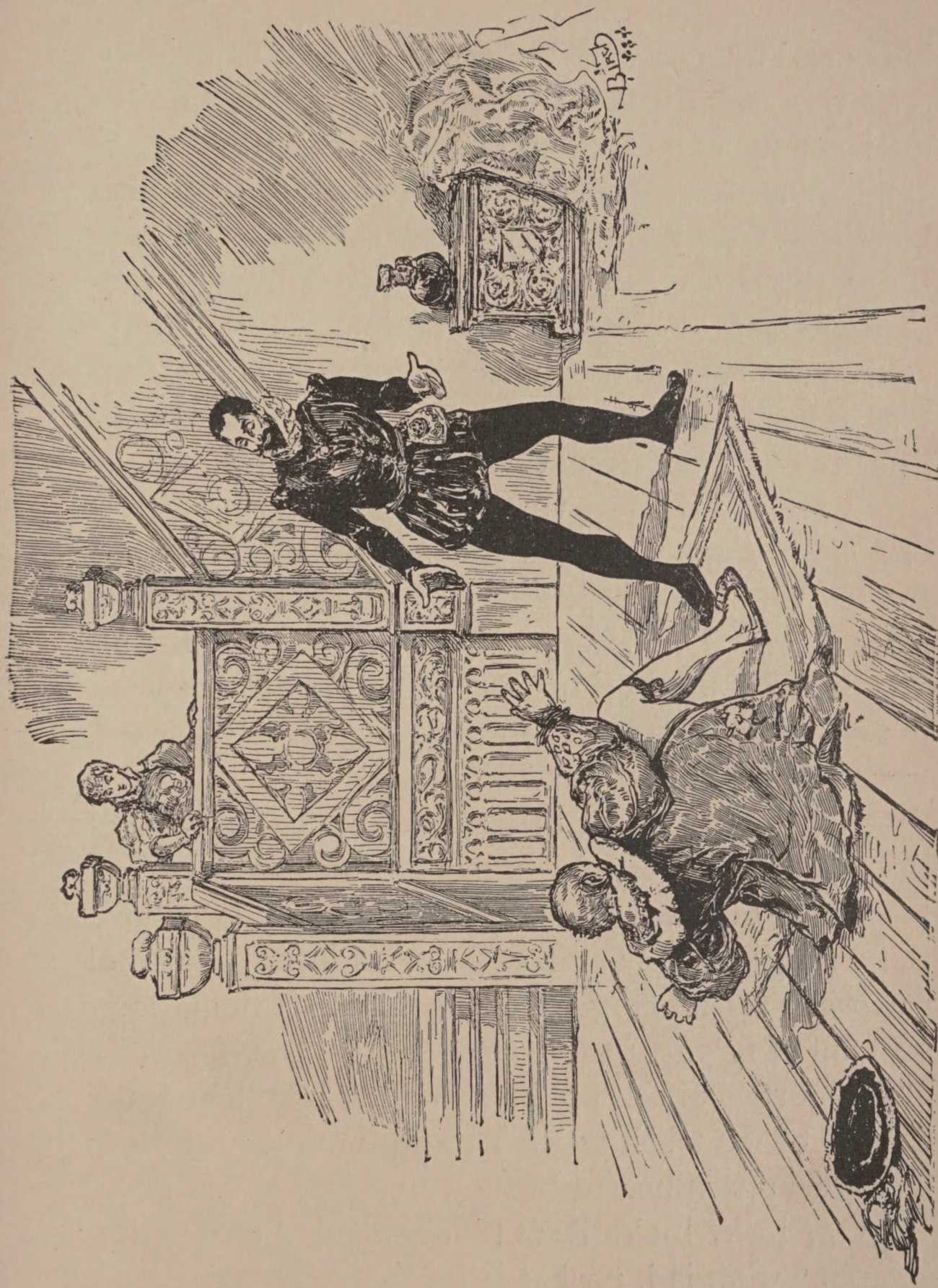


THE TWO KINGS TRY A WRESTLING MATCH.

way, and now that, in their trial of strength. There came one or two well-made feints at throwing, and then suddenly, so the record says, "the king of France, who was an expert wrestler, tripped up the heels of his brother of England, and gave him a marvellous somerset."

"Revenge, revenge! I am not yet beaten!" cried the fallen prince, springing to his feet, but then came the summons to supper. and the wrestle of the kings was over.

The fortnight of pageantry and pleasure ended all too quickly for Rauf and Margery, and for many an older participant, but the end came at last, as come it must, to all good times. And now it was Saturday, the twenty-third of June, the feast of the vigil of St. John, kept in memory of that early pope of Rome, imprisoned and martyred by Theodoric, the Ostrogoth. As fitted both a high-feast day of the Roman church, and the last hours of an occasion in which that church had played so prominent a part, the lord-cardinal announced a solemn mass to be sung by both the French and English priests. So, in the great lists, which for twelve days had rung with the clash of sword and lance, the shouts of contestants and the cheer of victory, on a great platform a gorgeous chapel was erected, hung with cloth of gold and splendid draperies, while altars and reliquaries shone with gold and gems. The oratories of the



“THE KING OF FRANCE, WHO WAS AN EXPERT WRESTLER, TRIPPED UP THE HEELS OF HIS BROTHER OF ENGLAND, AND GAVE HIM A MARVELLOUS SOMERSET.”

kings and queens were royally furnished, and chairs-of-state, under canopies of cloth of gold, stood on the platform for the cardinals, bishops, and prelates of England and France. Dressed in soft camlet robes, blood-red from head to foot, the cardinals and their trains of priests and dignitaries moved in slow procession from the chapel to the chairs. Then, amid a solemn silence, in the presence of a vast multitude that thronged the galleries and stood without the lists, the great Cardinal Wolsey, changing his red robes for his richest vestments of crimson velvet and cloth of gold, opened the service, in which the English and French priests and chanters took alternate parts. The kings and queens knelt at the altars, and all the curious forms of service that were the usages of that age of form in religion, as in arms, were carefully observed.

Right in the midst of it all, as the rich strains of the "Gloria in excelsis" filled the air, there rose a loud noise of roaring and hissing, and lo! high above the French camp at Arde appeared the figure of "a great salamander or dragon, four fathoms long and full of fire."

Margery started up in alarm and clutched the sleeve of Rauf, himself not all unmoved at the strange apparition.

"Oh, look, look, Rauf!" she said, beneath her breath, "what is it; what is it?"

But even Rauf's cup of wonders was filled to overflowing, and he simply gazed, speechless.

"See, see, it comes this way," he said, involuntarily ducking his head, as the fiery monster, cleaving the air, headed towards them and then "passed over the chapel to Guisnes as fast as a footman can go, and as high as a bow-shot from a cross-bow."

Surprise, indecision, dismay, and fear were seen on many faces, and a sigh of relief broke from countless watchers as the last vestige of the fiery trail vanished from the sky.

"Oh, what a monster!" said Margery; "what could it have been, Rauf?"

The boy plunged down into the very depths of his boyish wisdom, but found no fitting explanation, and both the children turned questioning faces to Sir Rauf Verney, who, with Lady Gray, was watching their astonishment with evident amusement.

"Rest easy, my little ones," he said. "'T is no portent nor omen, but only one of those conceits in fire brought from Italy for the French lords. It can harm no one. Even now it lies all dead and blackened on our camping ground at Guisnes."

And so Rauf and Margery saw their first fireworks, then an almost unheard-of wonder in Europe.

Below in the lists, but little disturbed by the fiery dragon, of which they had probably had warning, the royal worshippers went on with the service, and a

Latin sermon on the blessings of peace closed the mass. Then came the great state dinner served in the lists, the kings sitting in one chamber beneath a golden canopy, the queens in another, the cardinals and prelates in another, and the lords and ladies in still other apartments. Rauf and Margery, with the robust appetites of healthy children, dipped like young epicures into all the dainties, and richly enjoyed the feast, pitying meanwhile the enforced courtesies of royal ceremonial, which would not permit the kings and queens to take a mouthful, but forced them to pass the time in polite conversation, while the inviting courses came and went untasted.

"'T is glorious to see the queens' highnesses, and be so near to them; is it not, Rauf?" asked happy Margery.

"Ay, that it is," he answered, glancing toward the queens' table, where stately conversation was the only thing indulged in; "but —" here he paused with a huge piece of pasty raised half-way to his mouth, "think how much more glorious to be as we are, and —" speaking with his mouth full of the pasty — "to talk and eat, both."

"Heaven protect and keep our fair young demoiselle," said King Francis, as he bent over Margery in farewell, with as courteous a salute even as he gave to the lady queen of England.

The closing hours of the great interview had come. It was the afternoon of Sunday, the twenty-fourth of June, 1520. The final exchange of state visits and dinners had been made, and now the French and English retinues, with the sovereigns and cardinals, met in the lists to say farewell. With the interchange of many rare and costly gifts—horses of blood, litters and chariots, hounds and hawks, bracelets and necklaces, chains, and robes of gold and silver tissue, of velvet and of damask,—with many regrets and courteous phrases ; with flatteries and promises innumerable ; with the music of trumpets and clarions, hautboys and sackbuts and flutes ; with the solemn covenant of the kings to build in the golden valley a memorial chapel for daily masses, to be called “ the Chapel of our Lady of the Peace ” ; amid the boom of artillery, the waving of banners, and the echoing shouts of farewell, the courts of France and England took leave of each other, and the “ Meeting of the Kings ” was a thing of the past.

And so, back to Calais, and, after a week's delay, over-sea to England went Rauf and Margery, full of regret that the splendid life of pleasure and excitement that they had lived for two royal weeks had come to an end. The intimacy between them never weakened, but developed and strengthened into a lasting friendship. Visits to Verney Hall and to the manor house of Carew were frequent,

and whether climbing the Chiltern Hills, or exploring the woods of Aylesbury, or scouring with horse and hawk and hound the verdant vales of Surrey, one topic for conversation never lacked. As they grew older they learned to see beneath the glitter of pageantry and the sound of courtly phrases the deeper designs of policy and state-craft ; but still the memories of that youthful journey to France remained ever radiant and glorious with the halo of romance, and to their latest days they could tell again and again to open-mouthed audiences of children and grandchildren the never-failing story of the wonders and the glories of the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

Such, in brief detail, dear reader, is the story of that royal interview between the kings of France and England, to which reference is so often made ; which stands in history as one of the most sumptuous, most imposing, and most useless of all the ceremonials on record ; and upon which illuminator and artist, poet, historian, and novelist have drawn for subject and for theme. Many of the descriptions of dress, of interview, and of ceremony have here been omitted, both from lack of space and from an indisposition to tire with too much gold and glitter. Nor has mention been made of that other side of the picture—of the motley crowds that hung upon the skirts of the pageant, kept back only by the

piques and bows of the guards ; of the poverty and suffering of the people who were squeezed and taxed for the money expended in this gorgeous show. No; nor of the utter fruitlessness of the whole affair as a matter of statesmanship. For the great King Henry of England, and his shrewd adviser, the lord-cardinal, by an act of double-dealing almost unparalleled in history, went direct from the treaties, the promises, the presents, and the



“ IN THE VERDANT VALES OF SURREY.”

pretended affections of that stately farewell in the “golden valley,” to the town of Gravelines, near Dunkirk, where waited the crafty young emperor,

Charles the Fifth. With him, in three days, Henry arranged a treaty that broke all the promises that had been made to Francis, and, as the record shows, "sacrificed to a new alliance the monarch whose hospitality he had accepted and returned."

Yet, such disloyal conduct was esteemed shrewd statesmanship ; and now, even as then, politics and diplomacy, in the hands of men who disregard truth and faith and honor, may be as full of deceit and hypocrisy. But, as you read history thoughtfully, you will learn also that true manliness and true womanliness pay best in the long run, and that he who tries to walk in the line of duty or of honest faith, be he prince or peer, youth or yoe-man, statesman or student, helps on, in some degree, the progress and betterment of the world in which he lives.

But it was during the reigns of the three princes we have here met—Henry of England, Francis of France, and Charles of Germany—that the more practical light of modern endeavor began to change the thought, the customs, and the manners of Christendom ; and, as almost the last flush of that glory of chivalry and ceremonial that marked the times which we now call the Middle Ages, there is to be found much of interest, much of gorgeous coloring, and much of picturesque magnificence in the wonder-filled story of the Field of the Cloth of Gold.



IX.

“MONSIEUR, THE CAPTAIN OF THE CARAVEL.”

(A Story of the Old Régime.)

Adapted from the French of Madame Eugenie Foa.

[A.D. 1666.]

1.

THE GENTLEMEN-VOLUNTEERS.

IT was the days of the “Old Régime,”—that time of struggle in Europe when that caste-ridden land was the sport of princes and the prey of scheming courtiers. Kings were jealous of kings, and nations of nations. France and England, Holland and Spain, Austria and Germany, the Italian despotisms and the Northern kingdoms, were all in a ferment of hatred and of feud. France, with the finest army in the world, was scheming the dismemberment and appropriation of Spain; Holland, with the strongest navy in the world, was grappling in actual war with England.

It was, indeed, the day of great naval battles and

triumphs, and England, which had won the supremacy of the seas under Raleigh and Drake and brave Sir Richard Grenville, had now to yield the palm to Holland, whose great admirals, De Ruyter and Van Tromp, had proved the valor and strength of Holland in many a stubborn sea-fight, and now carried at the mast-head of the admiral's flag-ship a great broom, in proof of their claim that the Dutch republic had swept the seas of her enemies.

It was in the year 1666, and when the war between Holland and England was at its height, that a stout young lad paced up and down the terrace wall of a well-built house that stood high upon one of the rocky cliffs of the French coast near to Calais in the old province of Picardy.

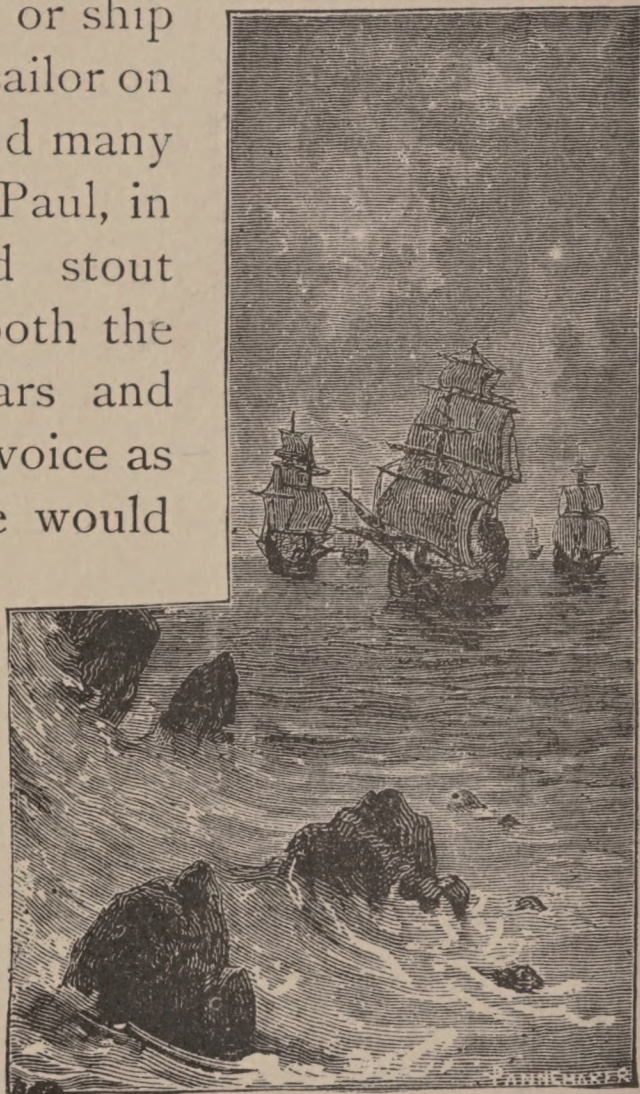
With a strong and sturdy frame, a clear eye and a frank, open face,—a sailor lad, every inch of him,—Jean Bart, though scarce fifteen, was one of the handiest and most trusted assistants in the employ of Master Raoul Valbue, the royal pilot in the village of St. Paul.

The royal pilot's house looked from its high cliff far out across the choppy Straits of Dover and the broad North Sea, and it was on the terrace before this house that Jean Bart, evidently deep in thought, was slowly pacing back and forth.

Master Valbue was pilot of St. Paul and the coast thereabout by royal appointment, and his

light, high-sterned caravel was even now moored in safe harbor in the mouth of the little creek at the foot of the cliff.

Jean Bart was a capital sailor. Boy though he was, he could, like the man in the comic opera, "hand, reef, and steer, or ship a salvagee," with any sailor on the Channel coast. And many a little maiden of St. Paul, in queer-fitting cap and stout wooden shoes, knew both the sound of his ready oars and the ring of his merry voice as far off from shore he would send back the echo of her "Hillo-ho; boat ahoy!" Indeed his inseparable attendant, Pierre Sauret—a sad old sea-dog, who could smoke a stronger pipe and spin a tougher yarn than any other old sea-dog from Calais to Cherbourg,—firmly believed in the exceptional talents and valor of this Picard sailor-lad, who had been the old man's constant care ever since the day ten



OFF COLCHESTER TOWERS.

years before when the boy's father, brave Corn  lle Bart, had been killed by English guns in the port of Dunkirk.

For Jean, old Sauret kept his cheeriest story and his toughest yarn ; but this night not even his favorite sea-fibs about the great sea-serpent of the Bay of Biscay or of the giant mariner of the Southern seas could hold or interest the musing lad.

For Jean had just heard of the great sea-fight in the Downs—that stretch of water between Dover and Margate, or the North and South Forelands, on the southeastern coast of England,—in which after a four days' fight, the Dutch Admiral De Ruyter had defeated and scattered the fleet and forces of Prince Rupert and General Monk, the English commanders.

The boy's restless nature yearned for opportunity for action, and the free, roving spirit of his sea-faring ancestry filled him with a longing to see a naval battle, and to share its dangers and excitements.

Boys and girls of these less warlike days cannot perhaps understand this half-savage desire of young Jean Bart, but this bold French lad of two centuries ago was but a type of his age—the age of unrest and battle—just as, I trust, our gentler and stay-at-home boys and girls are types of our happier days when wars are less frequent, nations more friendly,



“ A LITTLE MAIDEN OF ST. PAUL.”

(From a painting by Grayson.)

and men less ready to hack and hew each other because of real or fancied differences.

“What a sight it must have been!” exclaimed young Jean aloud, as old Pierre Sauret paused for breath in one of his best sea stories.

“It was indeed, as you say, a great sight, Master Jean,” said the old man. “The giant sailor rose at least a half-fathom above our mast-head, and——”

“A plague on your sea giant,” cried Jean, impatiently. “It is not of him I was thinking, Pierre. I meant this fight between the Admiral De Ruyter and the English, of which we have heard. Must it not have been glorious? How I would like, if only for once, to see the great admiral and to beat the English!”

“Truly, Master Jean——” old Sauret began, but just then they heard a footstep, and through the open gateway of the pilot’s garden came the form of a man dimly outlined in the night shadows.

Jean’s sharp eyes, however, recognized the newcomer at once. He was the innkeeper of the White Cross, a tavern in the village of St. Paul.

“Well, friend Mousset,” said the boy, “and what brings you here so late in the night?”

“A thousand pardons, Monsieur Jean,” said the innkeeper, very politely, for the royal pilot and his men were important personages in the little sea-

village ; “ a thousand pardons for this late coming, but here, without, wait three young gentlemen of the court who desire to speak with Master Valbue.”

“ Master Valbue is at sea,” Jean Bart replied. “ What do they wish ? ”

“ At sea, say you ? ” cried the innkeeper. “ Why, does not his caravel float at her moorings yonder ? ”

“ Truly she does,” the boy answered, “ but all the same, the royal pilot is at sea. He has gone to conduct a crippled man-of-war—one of the Admiral De Ruyter’s fleet—into Calais harbor, so he cannot answer your wish ; but what, I ask, do these men desire ? ”

“ They are the lords of Cavoye, d’Harcourt, and de Coislin,” said Mousset, dwelling upon the high-sounding names with much satisfaction, “ and they are bound with the king’s permission as gentlemen-volunteers to the Admiral De Ruyter’s fleet. They wish that Master Valbue shall pilot them to the admiral’s flag-ship, off the coast of Harwich,”

“ Thanks, Mousset,” said Jean, simply, and then he added : “ Sauret, bid the gentlemen come here. I will see them.”

The innkeeper appeared quite taken aback by young Jean’s tone of authority, but old Sauret took it all as a matter of course, and lifting the copper lamp from its place in the terrace window he beckoned to Mousset, and proceeded to the street door

upon which the visitors were now rapping impatiently.

Very speedily the old man reappeared, followed by three young noblemen, gorgeous in silks and ribbons and great plumed hats. Jean stood leaning against the terrace-window and looked unconcernedly off upon the sea.

"The pilot Valbue?" loudly demanded the foremost of the three visitors, looking about the dimly-lighted terrace and apparently not noticing the boy.

"He is not here," Jean replied in much the same tone as that of the inquirer.

The man looked at him haughtily.

"And why is he not here, clown?" he said.

"That is his business," replied Jean, a trifle insolently, I fear.

"How now; no jokes with me, you young rascal," exclaimed the visitor angrily, raising his beribboned cane as if to strike.

Jean's too ready hand sought his leathern belt.

"Dare to strike me," he said, "and it shall go hard with you."

"Come, come, Cavoye," cried another of the new-comers, laying a hand on the arm of his companion, "this will never do. This boy is not one of your servants. I know how high-spirited are the sailors of Picardy." Then turning to the boy,

who still stood, calm but defiant, he added: "My friend, did not the royal pilot receive the order of Monsieur the Governor of Calais to conduct my-



"I AM THE ROYAL PILOT'S MATE," HE REPLIED.

self and these gentlemen in his caravel to the Dutch squadron? and if so, why is he not here and ready for us?"

"Sir," replied Jean, coolly, "a pilot can wait for no man when the call of danger comes. Master Valbue is not here, truly, but his caravel is, nevertheless."

"Well, and what good is his caravel to us?" angrily cried the hot-tempered Cavoye. "Who will use it, if he is not here?"

"I will," said Jean.

"You!" exclaimed the three lords in a breath, looking down at the boy with contempt. "Why, who are you?"

Jean Bart was quite as independent in tone and manner as his visitors. He picked up a sea-pillow he had been refilling and, stowing it carelessly under his arm, looked calmly and coolly at his questioners.

"I am the royal pilot's mate," he replied.

"Well, well," laughed the Chevalier d'Harcourt, turning to his companions, "here is a singular child." Then he added impatiently: "Come, let us go, gentlemen. We waste time here. Since the royal pilot is not at his post, we must report our misadventure to the governor."

"As you please, gentlemen," said Jean, seemingly unmoved; "light them to the door, Sauret."

The three gentlemen turned toward the house, undecidedly.

"Ten thousand thunders!" exclaimed the Mar-

quis de Coislin, as Sauret took up the lamp, "but this is most vexatious? To be so near the battle and yet not able to get to it."

"And all because of this stupid pilot," cried the angry Cavoye. "Are not we, who go under permission of the king to join De Ruyter, of more importance than a broken-down Dutch war-ship?"

Jean, though apparently so unconcerned, was in reality watching them anxiously, for he longed for the opportunity to show his abilities as a pilot. "Believe me, gentlemen," he said, as he saw them still hesitating at the open door, "believe me, gentlemen, I know of what I speak, when I tell you that if you do not make use of this night's wind you will regret it. Here is a southerly breeze to push you on; and here, too, is the moon, full and just rising. The water will be as light as day. In two hours you can double the South Foreland, and in two more we can make the North Foreland. Once there, God willing, we can easily find the fleet of the admiral, which, so the pilots tell me, now lies off that coast. It is as easy for me to take you there as to walk about this terrace. And if all this does not suit you, gentlemen, why—good-night to you."

"The boy is very confident," said the chevalier.

"And careless too—for there is much danger in the route he gives us," added the duke.

"But, nevertheless, he is adventurous," exclaimed the Marquis de Cavoye, "and I for one incline to risk it. My friend," he said impetuously, extending his gloved hand to Jean, "I was too hasty with you. I own it."

The boy grasped the scented glove of the marquis in his brown little fist and shook it cordially.

"Then, sir, I will think no more of it," he said. "If you had thrashed me, good faith, then would I have thrashed you, and we could have proved which was the better man. But that need not have kept you from boarding my caravel, nor me from piloting you to the Dutch squadron. No, indeed! It would have been simply a little sport between gentlemen, and as a seaman, I——"

"But," interrupted Cavoye, in spite of his smile at the lordly airs of this singular lad, "but, my young friend, this is no small affair that we are abroad upon. Do you not see that, if we go with you, three lives are entrusted to your skill, and you are very young."

"Very young!" exclaimed Jean. "Why I am nearly fifteen. Nay, then, if you are afraid—good-night. You had better get a priest to escort you."

"We are Frenchmen and gentlemen, saucy boy," cried Cavoye. "But you, doubtless, cannot understand how great a responsibility you assume in thus offering to take men of our standing to the fleet of the admiral."

“ I say again that you are either afraid or else you cannot trust me,” said Jean. “ Sauret, show them the sword and the paper, and they may then believe in me.”

Nothing loth the old sailor led them into the house and, leaving them there an instant, speedily returned bearing, with great pride, a silver-hilted sword and a belt with a silver border. Taking from the belt a paper bearing the seal of France, he presented it to the Chevalier d'Harcourt.

“ Can you read, sir ? ” he said.

D'Harcourt smiled as he unrolled the paper, and the old man added as if repeating a lesson :

“ Then read, sir, and know that to create a desire in seamen to perfect themselves in artillery exercises, His Excellent Majesty, King Louis XIV., has ordered that two prizes shall be distributed each Sunday to those who make the best answers to the questions put to them, and to those who show the best knowledge of the use of the cannon. For the first prize, a *pistole*; for the second, a half *pistole*. That is the royal ordinance of 1660, as you may see it in the archives of Dunkirk. And yet, again, gentlemen, every three months there is an extraordinary prize of a sword and belt of the king's livery, valued at six *pistoles*, adjudged to the best artillerist. It is this prize that my young master has gained, gentlemen, as

you may see by this certificate"—and he rapped the paper proudly—"which attests that the said Jean Bart, apprenticed coast pilot, has gained the prize as the best artilleryman of Calais."

"And you are Jean Bart?" demanded D'Harcourt.

"I am," replied the boy, proudly.

"And you have been a sailor?"

"Seven years."

"And you are sure ——"

"Sure!" the boy burst out indignantly. "Why, sirs, you could not have more ceremony if you were going to be hung. There is ten o'clock ringing from the church tower. Time passes, gentlemen. Is it yes or no?"

"But your crew?" queried de Coislin.

"Oh, the crew will soon be ready," said Jean. "It is this old man, Sauret, who knows the sea as he does his pocket, the two sailors now asleep in the caravel yonder, and myself—the captain. Do you go?"

"Go? Of course," answered the impetuous Cavoye. "Come, gentlemen, we cannot let this boy be more resolute than we. Make ready your caravel, Jean Bart, and we will join you speedily with our men."

"But not too many, sir," said Jean. "I may not over-ballast the caravel."

“Why, we do not bring the king’s army, boy,” laughed de Cavoye. “We will but bring a valet apiece and no more,” and at once they were gone.

Jean Bart was quiet enough after his passengers had departed, though old Sauret rattled on as was his wont, now praising his own eloquence over Jean’s certificate, and now telling a long story of a mermaid and a whale.

“Tell me, Sauret,” said Jean, breaking in upon the old man’s story, “tell me, if a—certain thing—of which I do not wish now to speak, but which may happen nevertheless—if such a thing should happen—tell me, Sauret, could you bring back Master Valbue’s caravel alone?”

“Bring back the caravel—alone—and without you, Master Jean,” cried the old man. “Why, then, where would you be?”

“God knows, my dear old friend,” replied Jean, soberly.

“Ah, then, God knows for me also,” said the loving old man; “for where you go, there go I too, Master Jean, were it to the end of the world; and where you remain, there do I, though it be at the bottom of the ocean.”

“Well, Sauret, let us hope it will not be there,” said Jean; “and now go, waken Jacques and Hervé, who are asleep in the caravel, and make all things

ready for our sailing ; these high and mighty gentlemen cannot be long coming."

"And you are to be captain of the caravel, Master Jean," said old Sauret, proudly. "Ah, would that your father could have seen this night, and at fifteen—at fifteen ! But think of it !"

And in high spirits the faithful old man went out to make ready the caravel.

Before fifteen minutes had passed, caravel, crew, and passengers were in readiness for the start. The three lords, de Cavoye, de Coislin, and d'Harcourt, with their valets and luggage descended the rock-steps, hewn out of the solid face of the cliff, at the foot of which floated the pilot's vessel. There Jean Bart received them.

"To England, Monsieur the little Captain !" cried Cavoye, gaily, as he mounted the rope ladder that swung at the side of the caravel.

"To England !" echoed his two companions, as they followed him over the side.

Young Jean lifted his peaked skull-cap with all the grace and dignity of one of his majesty's admirals.

"To England, gentlemen !" he responded, and mounted the swinging ladder.

Just then the quick tramp of a galloping horse fell upon their ears ; the rider drew rein on the the crest of the cliff above, and the next instant came clattering down the rocky steps.

“ Holo ; in the boat there ! ” he cried, as he came, and in the light of the full moon Jean recognized the livery of one of the couriers of the governor of Calais.

“ Holo ; on the shore ! ” replied the boy.

“ From Monsieur the Governor of Calais,” said the messenger. “ He bids you, the captain of the caravel, if the wind hold fair, to stay for nothing, nor delay on your course toward the Dutch squadron. Monsieur the Governor is advised that English ships are cruising in the channel.”

“ *Peste !* ” came in vexed undertone from the boy on the swinging ladder. Then, with a nod to the messenger, and the simple reply, “ It is well,” he sprang lightly to the deck of the caravel and gave instant order to weigh anchor.

II.

IN ENGLISH WATERS.

The caravel of Master Valbue, the royal pilot of St. Paul, was one of the queer-looking coasting vessels of those old days—much the same in appearance as were the three little vessels in which Columbus ventured out upon the broad Atlantic and discovered a new world across the sea. It had a high, square, and narrow-looking stern, a wide and high-built bow ; it was without

top-mast, and carried a lateen or large triangular sail. It was a good sailer and was easily managed by the small crew that the boy pilot had as his assistants. The breeze was favorable, and the moon, now high in the heavens, distinctly showed the course. The voyagers were soon speeding along the coast of Kent and through the Downs, where the great sea-fight had taken place, and now a broad opening off their port bow showed them that they were in the king's channel at the mouth of the Thames.

It was now that Jean Bart gave a whispered order to the helmsman, and the vessel, changing her course, scud before the wind straight up the broad mouth of the English river.

The three noblemen looked at each other uneasily. They, too, had heard the message of the governor, "English ships are cruising in the channel," and they had no desire to be run down and captured by the enemy's cruisers. What did this new course of their young pilot mean? Together and instantly they sprang from the bench upon which they had been sitting and hastened toward Jean Bart, who, hatless and lightly clad, was now looking over the rail, absorbed in his own observations, and apparently forgetful of both his passengers and his caravel. The Marquis de Cavoye rapped him smartly on the shoulder.



"See here, my friend," he demanded, "is it wise thus to run out of your course?"

The young pilot turned on his questioner with flashing eyes.

"Sit down, gentlemen," he said, "or, if you are tired, go to your hammocks. I can sail my vessel without your advice."

Cavoye's face grew red with anger.

"Well, but I like that," he said. "Look ye, fellow, do you know the great risk you run in thus disobeying the governor's order? Come, return to the proper course at once, or it shall go hard with you."

Apparently unmoved by this threat Jean still gazed out over the rail. Then he said, without even glancing up :

"Which of us two commands this caravel?"

"Unfortunately you do, rascal," answered Cavoye angrily ; "and it would seem only to lose us all."

Again came the calm question of the boy, "And which one of us fills, just now, the office of royal pilot on this deck?"

"You again, headstrong fellow," replied the marquis.

Young Jean straightened himself and looked his angry passenger full in the face.

"Then, sir," he said, "it is my order that you seat yourself at once and leave me alone."

And still the caravel sped on its new course into the mouth of the Thames.

For an instant the three passengers were almost speechless with astonishment and rage. Then they burst out almost in a breath :

“Clown !” “Pig !” “Rascal !” “What does this mean ?”

“Do you think,” demanded Cavoye, threateningly, “that gentlemen like us will allow ourselves to be led and bullied by such a stupid boy as you ?” And the noble marquis in his excess of rage shook both his clenched fists in the face of the boy. “Come,” he cried ; “boy, mate, captain, royal pilot—whatever you call yourself—change your course or, trust me, you shall suffer for it !”

“Perhaps the boy is a traitor,” said de Coislin, “and has but lured us here to sell us to the English. Have we gotten ourselves into such a fool’s trap, think you ?”

“Change your course,” again demanded the wrathful de Cavoye ; “change your course, you young rascal, or we will fling you overboard !”

“Try it if you dare !” cried Jean facing them again with flashing eyes, “try it if you dare !” Then, as if a new thought had struck him, he added, “Very well, sir ; fling me overboard. You can do it. You are six to four. You have your swords and I have but a sheath knife. But, tell me,

who will pilot you from this place if I am at the bottom of the sea? Not old Sauret here, who will follow me down there, too, rather than pilot you. Neither will it be Jacques, nor Hervé; for Jacques, scarce knows his right hand from his left and Hervé, who is at the helm, will only obey my orders. The English are scarce a gunshot off. There—see there—can you not see off to starboard—but no you are not sailor enough for that. Those black dots far off to starboard, though, are frigates—English frigates! Now will you fling me overboard? Steady, Hervé; keep her right on this tack. Now then, gentlemen, yonder are the English frigates. Will you sit quietly by or will you take my place—one of you—as captain of the caravel?”

The three noblemen looked at each other in perplexity.

“But at least, good Jean,” said the Chevalier d’Harcourt, swallowing his alarm and wrath and striving to speak calmly, “at least, good Jean, you will explain to us——”

The boy straightened himself proudly.

“No, sir, I will explain nothing,” he said. “At sea I answer only my superiors and on this deck I have none. *I* am captain of the caravel!”

There was nothing for it but to keep quiet, and with deep and bitter maledictions against this mad boy, who seemed piloting them to capture or to

death, and against themselves, also, for being so foolish as to have trusted themselves to his guidance, the three noble lords sullenly reseated themselves, while the caravel still sped up the Thames and the boy pilot stood calmly at his post of observation. On board the caravel all was still, only the wash of the waves against the vessel's prow breaking the silence of the clear night.

But if they were still, the boy's passengers were by no means calm within. Rage and chagrin filled their hearts to think that they—the three most brilliant and haughty noblemen of King Louis' haughty court—should be obliged to yield to a common sailor-boy—a child—a stupid young rascal whom they thought beneath contempt. But they vowed to be revenged upon him when once affairs should turn or they were safe on board the admiral's flag-ship. Would they ever be safely there?

Finally de Coislin muttered in low tones to d'Harcourt:

“Why not throttle this fellow, anyhow, and trust to luck to guide us to the Dutch fleet?”

But before the chevalier could reply they saw the young pilot start suddenly from his watchful attitude and hasten to the helmsman with a whispered command. The caravel came about with a turn that almost threw the passengers from their

bench, and then commenced a series of turns and tacks that surprised as well as interested them, in spite of their rage and fear.

Jean Bart seemed multiplied into a dozen pilots. He issued order after order with wonderful precision, clearness, and presence of mind, and in the midst of it all the wondering passengers discovered that the caravel was being hotly pursued by an English cruiser.

They watched the chase with breathless anxiety. At last, after perhaps fifteen minutes—it seemed to them an age—had been passed in these tacks and turns and manœuvres, Jean Bart, approaching them, said :

“Gentlemen, I wish to assure you that you have nothing to fear from the frigate that is pursuing us. I have the offing, and intend to bring her into shoal water, where she must give up the chase or run aground. The caravel rows in shallow water quite as well as she sails in the clear. See, see, gentlemen, how small the frigate is becoming ! Wait till we turn yonder rocky point ; there ! she has lost us ; we are safe from her clutch ! Now, who will say that I am not a bold and skilful seaman ? ”

“We will, rascal,” cried de Cavoye, “when we see you swinging from the longest yard-arm of the admiral’s ship ! ”

“As you please, gentlemen,” replied this very

cool lad ; “ we will see what we shall see when we are aboard the admiral’s ship ! ”

It was eight o’clock in the morning when Jean’s caravel ran alongside the admiral’s great flag-ship “ The Seven Provinces,” in the centre of the Dutch squadron, which lay at anchor in Hainford Water, off the Harwich shore.

The squadron was composed of seventy-five war-ships and eleven fire-ships, and was commanded by Michael Adrian de Ruyter, lieutenant-admiral of the States-General of the United Provinces.

The great stern of “ The Seven Provinces,” five stories in height and rich in bronze and carving, loomed up in the centre of the fleet like a gigantic tower. From the high topmast floated the flag of Holland in orange, white, and blue, while from the towered stern of the flag-ship streamed out the Golden Lion of the United Provinces, holding in his paws the silver sword and golden arrows of the States-General. It was an immense vessel, and Jean regarded it with wonder and delight.

“ Ahoy ; in the caravel ! ” came the challenge from the deck of the flag-ship.

“ France ; and a message from monsieur the governor of Calais,” replied Jean Bart.

“ Pass to starboard,” said the challenger, and the caravel with sails lowered drew alongside the flag-ship.

The moment a rope was tossed over, Jean with the agility of a monkey swung himself aloft and had leaped to the deck of "The Seven Provinces" before his lordly passengers had even begun to clamber up the ladder.

"Sir," said the boy saluting the officer of the deck, "will you conduct me to the admiral?"

The officer looked at this audacious young fellow in surprise.

"And who may you be?" he asked.

"I am the captain of the caravel," Jean replied, in a firm and resolute tone. "I wish to deliver my three passengers to the admiral."

"You can believe him, sir," said the Marquis de Cavoye, who had just gained the deck and stood at Jean's back; "he *is* the captain of the caravel, and a famous captain he is, as I can assure the admiral. Pass before, monsieur the captain of the caravel!"

Not apparently noticing the tone of mockery in which this was spoken, Jean Bart, with all the assurance of a grown-up captain, walked in advance of his three passengers, escorting them to the presence of the admiral.

"Monsieur the admiral," said the officer who conducted the visitors, as he pushed open the door of one of the inner cabins of the great ship, "I beg to announce the arrival of three French gentlemen charged with a message from monsieur the gov-

ernor of Calais, and also this young seaman—the captain of the caravel that brought them.”

The Admiral De Ruyter, a noble-looking old man of about sixty years, turned to greet his visitors. His kindly gray eyes had a look of surprise as they fell upon young Jean—“the captain of the caravel.” The lad blushed deeply as he met the gaze of the great sailor.

“Gentlemen,” said the admiral, glancing over the letter of the governor, “I learn from these despatches that you have the sanction of the ally of the Provinces and your lord, King Louis of France, to serve with me in the approaching naval combat as gentlemen volunteers. I shall be pleased of your assistance, and until that time will see you suitably quartered on this, my flag-ship. Is that all, gentlemen?”

“All, monsieur the admiral,” said the Marquis de Cavoye, answering for his companions, “except that we would ask you to add to your favors the further one of inflicting upon this young rascal here the punishment he deserves.”

The admiral looked again at Jean Bart.

“Why, what has he done?” he inquired.

“Ah, what has he not done, monsieur?” replied Cavoye. “The royal pilot at St. Paul not being at his post, this headstrong boy”—here he cast a withering glance at poor Jean—“declaring that he

was the pilot's mate, induced us to come to the squadron under his guidance. It was foolish, in us to agree I admit, but then—we are French and adventurous, and this child seemed so full of resolution and ability that we consented. Behold us then, monsieur the admiral—Messieurs de Coislin, d'Harcourt, and myself—afloat in the most miserable tub in the world and at the mercy of a headstrong boy. Before weighing anchor he received a message from monsieur the governor of Calais not to venture out of his course because of the English ships cruising in the channel. And yet, would you believe it, monsieur the admiral, it is precisely among these English frigates that this rascal fellow, this would-be captain has taken us !”

“Is this true?” demanded the admiral, twisting his long white mustache and looking rather queerly at young Jean. “And what have you to say in your defence, little captain?”

The boy looked at his questioner, with flushed face and forehead bathed in perspiration. He was breathing hard and evidently much excited and awed by the presence of the great sailor he had so desired to see.

“Pardon, monsieur the admiral,” he said, slowly; “I cannot—this charge does not frighten me—but you—you do, monsieur the admiral.”

The good-natured commander smiled at this open confession.

"I would not frighten you, my child," he said, kindly ; "but you have done a rash thing with these French gentlemen. What reason can you give?"

"That I can give only to you, alone, monsieur the admiral," said Jean, boldly, recovering his equanimity.

"Gentlemen," said the admiral, bowing toward his volunteers, "the officer will escort you to your quarters. We dine at noon. In any thing needful pray command my services."

The three noblemen withdrew and Jean Bart was alone with the admiral.

"Now my boy," said de Ruyter, turning to Jean, "did you indeed command this caravel—and alone?"

The boy was still suffering from the attack of timidity which many a stout-hearted boy, and often, indeed, many an older person, feels in the presence of one whom he regards as a superior or looks up to as an ideal. But he resolutely swallowed this "lump of timidity" that lay in his throat and looked at the admiral confidently.

"That was easy enough, monsieur the admiral—to command the caravel," he said ; "I have been many a time in these waters, from Calais to Flushing, from Flushing to the Suffolk coast. We unload many of our cargoes hereabout, from the Medway to Bawdsey Haven."

“And tell me, my boy,” queried the admiral, already appreciating the intrepidity of this small captain, “ere you ran alongside this ship did you meet nothing in your course?”

“I met, monsieur the admiral,—because I intended to meet—something,” answered Jean, with a meaning smile.

“So, so ; explain yourself,” said the admiral.

“See them, monsieur the admiral,” and Jean grew still more communicative. “At first my desire was to see you, a famous, a wonderful seaman. And then came quickly another desire. ‘For,’ said I, ‘Jean, my boy,’ said I, ‘it would be a fine stroke for you to find out what is to be seen in the mouth of the Thames ; it would be just what monsieur the admiral would like to know.’ This I wished to see, and this I saw !”

“You did, boy ?” cried de Ruyter, “and what ?”

“I saw—but how far do you think I ran that caravel, monsieur the admiral,” asked Jean, his face one great smile,—“and with those French lords on deck too ? I ran up the coast, sir, until I saw Colchester towers off the northwest quarter.”

“So far, lad ?” exclaimed the admiral.

“And near the shore, monsieur the admiral,” continued the boy, “off what they call the Bukey Sands, I saw about twelve or fifteen frigates. They were signalling the shore. I ran still nearer and,

from the many masts I saw, I should say that the whole English fleet is anchored off Sheerness, toward the Middle Ground. I would have gone even nearer, monsieur the admiral, but just then a frigate spied us and gave chase. But I did not fear the frigate, believe me ; a frigate draws more water than a caravel, and I could go where she dare not follow. I led them a pretty chase, however, but at last the frigate lost me near the West Rocks, and here I am, monsieur the admiral."

"Well done, well done, my boy," said the admiral, heartily, after Jean had finished his long story. "You have indeed done me a service. Your story but proves the truth of the other reports that have come to me, and tells me just what I wished to learn. And now, monsieur the captain of the caravel, such bravery and such a service call for some reward. What can I do for you, my boy ?"

"O monsieur the admiral," cried Jean, his voice trembling with excitement, "you can do—but ah! it is too much—if I dared but ask?"

"So, so," laughed the admiral, "is your demand so very great? Is it to be vice-admiral of the fleet, or perhaps lieutenant-admiral in my place?"

"Ah, sir, you are laughing at me," cried Jean.

"Well, well," said de Ruyter, "ask what you will. I am your debtor ; fear nothing."

“O then, sir—monsieur the admiral”—said Jean, “it is that I might not leave you, that I might remain at your side—as page, cabin-boy, what you will—if I can only behold a naval battle, and, perhaps, take part in it.”

The cool gray eyes of the good Admiral de Ruyter almost reflected the joy that sparkled in those of the enthusiastic boy.

“But—your caravel?” he queried.

“You can return it—can you not—to the pilot at St. Paul?” Jean suggested.

De Ruyter laid a hand upon the crisp black hair of the lad.

“It shall be done,” he said.

“What—and I can go with you, monsieur the admiral?”

“Surely, if you will,” responded the commander.

“Thanks, thanks—ten thousand thanks!” cried the happy boy. “I shall go wild with joy, I—but, ah, monsieur the admiral, I have still more to ask.”

“So much? Well, what now?” said the smiling admiral.

“I have with me a faithful old man—a good sailor—one who has cared for me since my own father, Cornélie Bart, fell at Dunkirk. He has never left me, monsieur the admiral; he never will leave me;”—the lad hesitated.



ADMIRAL DE RUYTER.
(From an old Dutch print.)

"He need not leave you," de Ruyter replied ;
"he, too, can remain."

Tears of joy coursed down Jean's brown cheeks.

"Ah, monsieur the admiral," he cried, "I have nothing more to wish. I would give my life to you. It is all I have."

"Nay, nay, child," said the good admiral, gravely, "guard your life for your country's sake ; she has need for such brave lads as you ; for you, I am sure, will some day do her honor."

"Ah, sir, I am too poor for that," said the boy.

"We are never too poor to rise, Jean," replied de Ruyter. "Listen, lad," he added, placing his hand kindly on the boy's shoulder, "they call me admiral, do they not ? I command one hundred ships of war. A great Republic trusts me, and kings send their nobles for service in my fleet. And yet, Jean, this Adrian de Ruyter, whom to-day you see in so high a place, was once but a poor little lad, earning his sou a day by turning the great wheel in Master Lampscus's rope-walk at Flushing. At eleven I took to the sea. I was cabin-boy and sailor, boatswain, mate, master, and captain,—and now, by God's grace, admiral of the fleet of the Provinces. One needs despair of nothing, my child. He who will, will. Now go, register your name in the books and let Master Lely examine you. Never mind his harshness, he is true

at heart. Be brave and loyal, Jean. You shall soon see a hot and stubborn sea-fight, and I shall not forget you."

III.

THE BATTLE.

Jean found old Sauret leaning over the high quarter of the flag-ship, turning, now to look at the manœuvres of the sailors on board the frigate, or, now, to look down upon the royal pilot's caravel that still lay moored to the great vessel.

"Sauret," he said, touching the old man on the shoulder.

"Ah, you have concluded," said the old sailor ;
"and when do we go, Master Jean?"

"Never, dear old man," replied the boy.

"Wha-what, Master Jean !" old Sauret cried.

"Never, I say," said Jean again ; "we are going to remain here—with the admiral. Come, we must be registered."

And so loyal a friend and servitor was old Pierre Sauret that without a word, simply lifting his hands for one instant in mute surprise, he followed the boy to the cabin of the purser.

After being duly registered as common sailors, and having then each received from the commissary of stores a green cloth jacket with orange facings,

and buttons, loose trousers of coarse woollen cloth, a red serge belt, and a brown woollen cap, Jean and Sauret passed to the cabin of the shipmaster, Abraham Lely.

They found him to be, as the admiral had stated, a harsh—almost a savage man. But so were most of those in authority at sea in those harsh old days of severe discipline, and the two new recruits simply obeyed him and answered all his questions.

At his orders they spliced ropes and answered the customary sea catechism, while Jean proved such a ready answerer of all the master's hard questions in gunnery and seamanship, that the stern old officer seemed almost sorry that he could not catch him tripping. At last, the examination over, Master Lely simply motioned them to the door, through which they departed without further delay.

"Ah, Master Jean," said old Sauret, when once they were upon the bridge, "if you had but consulted me before engaging for us here, I could have told you how different is the war-ship from the merchant service. It is slavery, Master Jean—it is slavery."

"Ah, Sauret," cried Jean, "but we are on the Admiral de Ruyter's vessel, and he, I know, will be no over-hard master. Why, old friend, he told me that he himself commenced even lower down,

and see—now is he admiral. What if some day you should say: Monsieur the Admiral Jean Bart!”

“And why not, Master Jean, why not!” exclaimed the loyal old man, almost fiercely; “there have been men, folk say, who from simple shepherds did become kings; and why might not one like you—sailor from grandfather to grandson—some day well become admiral?” But here a roll of drums interrupted these dreams of glory, and the Admiral de Ruyter, accompanied by Jean’s noble passengers, the three gentleman volunteers, passed along on a tour of inspection. They stopped as they saw Jean, and to the boy’s great astonishment the Marquis de Cavoye extended his hand.

“You are a brave lad and a gallant sailor, my friend,” he said. “Had you but told me of your project while we were on board your caravel, instead of maligning you, Jean Bart, I should have aided you.”

Before Jean could reply, an officer hastily approached the admiral and, saluting, presented a paper.

“Despatches, monsieur the admiral,” he said, “from Monsieur the Grand Pensionary* DeWitt, with orders for the greatest haste.”

* The Grand Pensionary of the Dutch Republic was its chief minister of state, and, in the seventeenth century, its virtual president.

The admiral ran his eye over the despatches.

“So, so,” he said; “here are orders for action. Gentlemen,” (this to the French noblemen) “you will not have long to wait. And as for you, Jean,” he said, placing his hand kindly on the lad’s shoulder, “I will keep my promise. Master Lely has reported so well of your proficiency that he will station you where you shall serve and fire one of the best pieces in my arsenal.”

The signal to weigh anchor was then given from the flag-ship, and an hour later the whole immense fleet of eighty ships of war set sail in line of battle and bore off from the Suffolk coast with a favoring breeze astern.

“Ah ha,” said Jean Bart, with a strange mixture of both hope and fear in his breast, “I shall smell powder to-morrow!”

And smell powder he did. For on the next day, the 12th of August, 1666, the fleets of England and of Holland, two hundred sail in all, met off Sheerness, in the mouth of the Thames.

Jean served his gun with wonderful precision and coolness.

“Sauret,” he had said, as the two gunners stood at their post just before the commencement of the engagement, “Sauret, look at me. It is the first time I have seen real war. I do not think I am afraid, and yet I am trembling. If then you should

see me turn pale or seem to weaken under fire, take this pistol and, for the honor of the name of Bart, shoot me with it through the head."

And old Sauret, taking the pistol, simply said: "Yes, Master Jean."

But he had no need to use it. War, terrible and brutal as it is, possesses a tremendous power of excitement, and those who before an action commences tremble and turn pale, are frequently the coolest and bravest of the fighting men. It was so with young Jean. Man after man was shot down at the guns around him, the noise and shock of battle as heard on the gun-deck of that great battle-ship was frightful, but through it all Jean stood manfully to his work, aiming and firing his piece, which brave old Sauret charged for him. So the lad who won the first prize in the artillery examination put his knowledge to practical effect.

All day the fight continued, and when at nine o'clock the firing ceased, the Admiral de Ruyter, with a wounded arm carried in a sling, descended to the gun-deck.

Passing the two powder-begrimed and blood-stained gunners, he struck young Jean lightly on the shoulder.

"Well, my boy, and how did you like that?" he asked.

“So well, monsieur the admiral,” replied Jean, saluting, “that I could wish that it might last longer, if my throat were not so dry.”

The admiral smiled at this answer. “Holo, there!” he called out to one of the sailors; “bring beer and biscuit for our cannoneer. So brave a young hero must not carry about a dry throat.”

Next morning the battle recommenced, and Jean, roused by the first cannon, was at his gun at once.

About noon there came a startling cry:

“A fire-ship to starboard!”

And down upon the great flag-ship bore one of these terrors of naval warfare, a condemned and unrigged frigate filled with explosives and combustibles, and known as a fire-ship, which, floating among the fleet of an enemy, would cause great havoc and destruction as she exploded.

Jean and old Sauret, and the three gentlemen volunteers, formed part of the picked crew of twenty men which, under command of Master Lely, pushed off to battle with the fire-ship. Their boat was one of the largest of those belonging to the frigate, and each man was armed to the teeth, with cutlass, pistol, and boarding knife. The three French noblemen were black with powder and smoke, and their ruined laces and torn clothes showed that they had not been mere lookers-on in the battle.

As the boat with Master Lely at the helm and the three gentlemen at the bow pushed off from the flag-ship, the great vessel so turned that the smaller boat dropped under her stern ; then when the fire-ship was two gun-shots away, the flag-ship sent a broadside full upon her.

Then the row-boat pulled to the right of the flag-ship and Jean's heart beat fast, for he knew that a moment of peril had arrived. A dozen sailors could be seen on the deck of the fire-ship.

At a word from Master Lely the French nobles in the bow threw their hand grenades on the deck of the fire-ship. These, exploding fiercely, quickly cleared her deck.

Just then Jean, whose eyes were fixed upon Master Lely's face, saw that brave man totter and fall, shot through the leg. At once the boy leaped to his feet, and noticing the position of the enemy, gave the direction to the helmsman who had taken the master's place.

Suddenly the young pilot detected a new movement on the fire-ship. "Master Lely," he cried, "they are putting off in their boat."

The wounded master raised himself to his knees.

"Back water, back water, for your lives!" he shouted. "The fire-ship is about to explode! Off, off, or we are lost!"

Three moments after a great column of smoke

following a flash of flame burst from the fire-ship, and with a tremendous report, the vessel exploded, and the flag-ship of the admiral was saved.

Such was Jean Bart's first naval battle. It was but the beginning of a life of adventure and of valor that has made him one of the great characters in the history of the sea and one of the heroes of the French people.

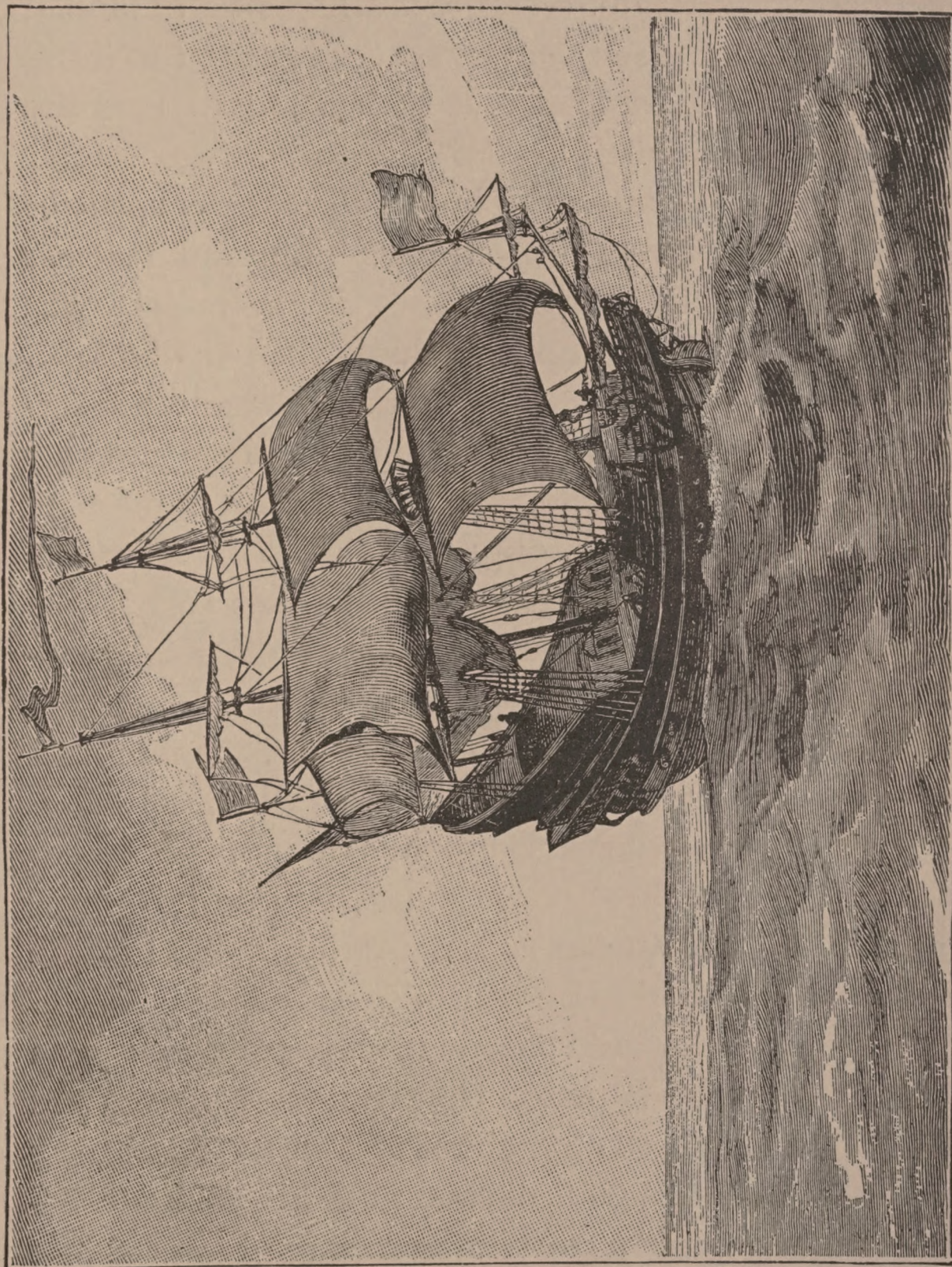
After a few years' service with the Admiral de Ruyter in the wars with England, Jean left the Dutch navy and returned to his native town of Dunkirk with the grade of second lieutenant.

Soon after, by the cool and relentless obstinacy of Louis XIV., the war between France and Holland was declared, and the former allies now became deadly foes.

Jean regretted the separation from his loved Dutch commander, but war, alas, knows no friendships, and he remembered the words of the admiral when the lad had wished that he might give him his life: "Nay, nay, child; guard your life for your country; she has need for such brave lads as you."

And a brave lad he was. Step by step he rose from simple sailor to a position of honor in the French navy.

In his day so rigid were the foolish rules of caste, that no person except of "high birth" could hold a command in the French navy.



“WHEREVER HE SAILED ENGLISH VESSELS LEARNED TO FEAR THE NAME OF JEAN BART.”

So Jean became the captain of a privateer or independent war-ship. His caravel was well manned and daringly officed, and wherever it sailed in those northern seas English vessels learned to fear the name of Jean Bart.

As he grew older the bold and fearless spirit of the boy ripened into a sturdy, bluff, and fearless manhood, and Monsieur the Captain Bart was known as a man who said just what he thought, in a blunt and open way. His valor and his services, however, could not keep him always in this independent command, and one day King Louis the Fourteenth, spying the brave sailor in a gallery at Versailles, summoned him to his side and said :

“Jean Bart, I appoint you chief of the squadron.”

“Sire, that is the right thing to do,” replied this bluff old seaman, whereat those who were not shocked at the answer laughed aloud, but King Louis simply said : “Gentlemen, you do not know Jean Bart. He speaks as a man who knows that he can give me good and faithful service.”

Through all those years of war and blood Jean Bart upheld the name of France upon the sea, and made its naval service almost equal to its military power. His feats of daring and his brilliant victories over greatly superior forces read almost like romances, but they are true none the less.



JEAN BART.
(From a Painting by Béranger.)

His statue in the old sea-port of Dunkirk in Northern France attests the honor in which the people of his native town have held him ; and his daring, his chivalry, and his unselfish devotion to what he deemed his duty have made him one of the heroes of France, and given him the title of "the Bayard of the Seas." Boys who enjoy stories of the sea and who revel in the excitement of sea-fights, escapes, and captures, will find no more interesting reading in all the fact and fiction of the ocean than the life-story of this fearless and popular French sailor, whose first historic exploit was his bold spying-out of the position of the English fleet in the Thames on that memorable day when he pushed boldly out from Calais as "Monsieur the Captain of the Caravel."





X.

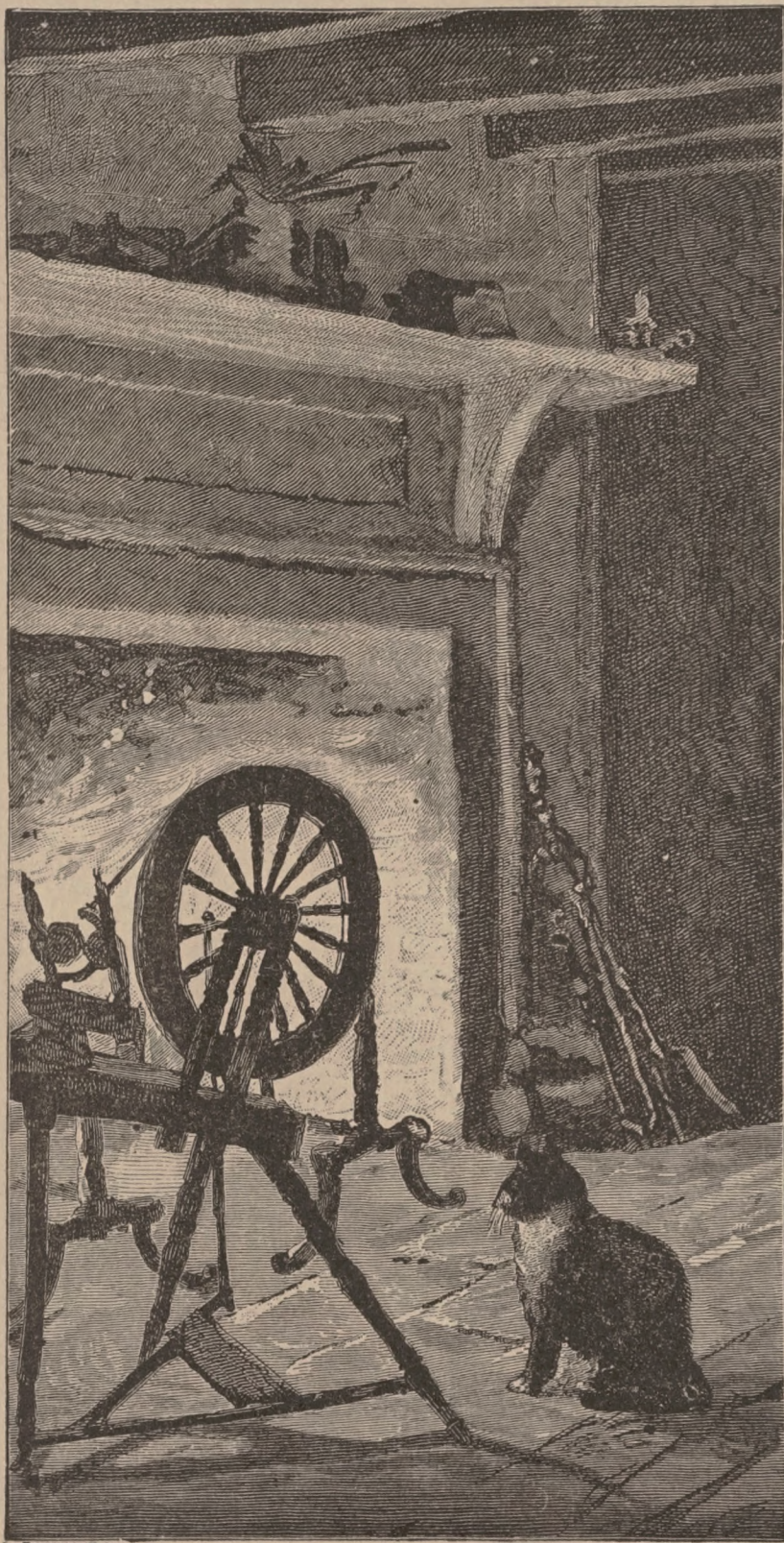
THE LITTLE LORD OF THE MANOR.

[A.D. 1783.]

IT was the 25th of November, 1783—a brilliant day, clear, crisp, and invigorating, with just enough of frosty air to flush the eager cheeks and nip the inquisitive noses of every boy and girl in the excited crowd that filled the Bowery lane from Harlem to the barriers, and pressed fast upon the heels of General Knox's advance detachment of Continental troops marching to the position assigned them, near the "tea-water pump." In the Duane mansion a fire was blazing brightly and Mistress Dolly's pet cat was purring comfortably in the cheerful light. But Mistress Dolly herself cared just now for neither cat nor comfort. She, too, was on the highway watching for the exciting events that were to make this Evacuation Day in New York one of the most memorable occasions in the history of the chief American city.

At some points the crowd was especially pushing

and persistent, and Mistress Dolly Duane was de-



BOOKBOUT Co

IN THE DUANE MANSION.

cidely uncomfortable. For little Dolly detested crowds, as, in fact, she detested every thing that interfered with the comfort of a certain dainty little maiden of thirteen. And she was just on the point of expressing to her cousin, young Edward Livingston, her regret that they had not stayed to witness the procession from the tumble-down gateway of the

Duane country-house, near the King's Bridge road, when, out from the crowd, came the sound of a child's voice, shrill and complaining.

"Keep off, you big, bad man!" it said; "keep off and let me pass! How dare you crowd me so, you wicked rebels?"

"Rebels, hey?" a harsh and mocking voice exclaimed. "Rebels! Heard ye that, mates? Well crowed, my little cockerel. Let 's have a look at you," and a burly arm rudely parted the pushing crowd and dragged out of the press a slight, dark-haired little fellow of seven or eight, clad in velvet and ruffles.

"Put me down! Put me down, I say!" screamed the boy, his small face flushed with passion. "Put me down, I tell you, or I'll bid Angevine horse-whip you!"

"Hark to the little Tory," growled his captor. "A rare young bird, now, is n't he? Horsewhip *us*, d' ye say—us, free American citizens? And who may you be, my little beggar?"

"I am no beggar, you bad man," cried the child, angrily. "I am the little lord of the manor."

"Lord of the manor! Ho, ho, ho!" laughed the big fellow. "Give us grace, your worship," he said, with mock humility. "Lord of the manor! Look at him, mates," and he held the struggling little lad toward the laughing crowd. "Why, there

are no lords nor manors now in free America, my bantam."

"But I am, I tell you!" protested the boy. "That 's what my grandfather calls me—oh, where is he? Take me to him, please: he calls me the little lord of the manor."

"Who 's your grandfather?" demanded the man.

"Who? Why, don't you know?" the "little lord" asked, incredulously. "Everybody knows my grandfather, I thought. He is Colonel Phillipse, Baron of Phillipsbourg, and lord of the manor; and he 'll kill you if you hurt me," he added, defiantly.

"Phillipse, the king of Yonckers! Phillipse, the fat old Tory of West Chester! A prize, a prize, mates!" shouted the bully. "What say you? Shall we hold this young bantling hostage for the tainted Tory, his grandfather, and when once we get the old fellow serve him as we did the refugee at Wall-kill t' other day?"

"What did you do?" the crowd asked.

"Faith, we tarred and feathered him well, put a hog-yoke on his neck and a cow-bell, too, and then rode him on a rail till he cheered for the Congress."

"Treat my grandfather like that—my good grandfather? You shall not! you dare not!" cried

the small Phillipse, with a flood of angry tears, as he struggled and fought in his captor's clutch.

Dolly Duane's kindly heart was filled with pity at the rough usage of the "little lord."

"Oh, sir," she said, as she pushed through the crowd and laid her hand on the big bully's arm, "let the child go. 'T is unmannerly to treat him as you do, and you 're very, very cruel."

The fellow turned roughly around and looked down into Dolly's disturbed and protesting face.

"What, another of 'em?" he said, surlily. "Why, the place is full of little Tories."

"No, no; no Tory I!" said indignant Dolly. "My father is Mr. Duane, and he is no Tory."

"Mr. Duane, of the Congress?" "Give up the lad to the maid." "Why harm the child?" came mingled voices from the crowd.

"What care I for Duane!" said the bully, contemptuously. "One man 's as good as another now in free America,—is n't he? Bah! you 're all cowards; but I know when I 've got a good thing. You don't bag a Phillipse every day, I 'll warrant you."

"No; but we bag other game once in a while," said Dolly's cousin, young Edward Livingston, pushing his way to her side. "We bag turncoats, and thieves, and murdering runagates sometimes, even in 'free America'; and we know what to do

with them when we do bag them. Friends," he cried, turning to the crowd, "do you know this fellow? He's a greater prize than the little Phillipse. 'T is Big Jake of the Saw-mill—a 'skinner' one day and a 'cow-boy' next, as it suits his fancy and as it brings him booty. I know him, and so does the water-guard. I am Livingston, of Clermont Manor. Let down the lad, man, or we 'll turn you over to the town-major. He 'd like rarely to have a chance at you."

The crowd uttered a cry of rage as it closed excitedly around the burly member of the lawless gang that had preyed upon the defenceless people of the lower Hudson during the years of war and raid. The bully paled at the sound, and loosed his hold upon the little Phillipse. Without waiting to see the issue, young Livingston dragged the "little lord" from the throng, while his companion, Master Clinton, hurried Dolly along, and they were soon free from the crowd that was dealing roughly enough with Big Jake of the Saw-mill.

"Now, Dolly, let us go back to the farm before we get into further trouble," said Cousin Ned, a pleasant young fellow of eighteen, who looked upon himself as the lawful protector of "the children."

"But what shall we do with our little lord of the manor, Cousin Ned?" asked Dolly.

"The safest plan is to take him with us," he replied.



"OH, SIR," SAID DOLLY, "LET THE CHILD GO."

"Oh, no, sir ; no," pleaded the little boy. "We sail to-day with Sir Guy Carleton, and what will grandfather do without me?" And then he told them how, early that morning, he had slipped away from Angevine, Colonel Phillipse's body-servant, passed through the barriers and strolled up the Bowery lane to see the "rebel soldiers"; how he had lost his way in the crowd, and was in sore distress and danger until Dolly interfered ; and how he thanked them "over and over again" for protecting him. But "Oh, please, I must go back to my grandfather," he added.

Little Mistress Dolly had a mind of her own, and she warmly championed the cause of the "lost little lord," as she called him.

"Cousin Ned," she said, "of course he must go to his grandfather, and of course we must take him. Think how I should feel if they tried to keep me from my father !" and Dolly's sympathetic eyes filled at the dreadful thought.

"But how can we take him?" asked Cousin Ned. "How can we get past the barriers?"

A hundred years ago, New York City proper extended northward only as far as the present post-office, and during the Revolution a line of earth-works was thrown across the island at that point to defend it against assault from the north. The British sentinels at these barriers were not to give up

their posts to the Americans until one o'clock on this eventful Evacuation-Day, and Cousin Ned, therefore, could not well see how they could pass the sentries.

But young Master Clinton, a bright, curly-haired boy of thirteen, said confidently: "Oh, that 's easily done." And then, with a knowledge of the highways and by-ways which many rambles through the dear old town had given him, he unfolded his plan. "See here," he said; "we 'll turn down the Monument lane, just below us, cut across through General Mortier's woods to Mr. Nicholas Bayard's, and so on to the Ranelagh Gardens. From there we can easily get over to the Broad Way and the Murray-Street barrier before General Knox gets to the Fresh Water, where he has been ordered to halt until one o'clock. When the guard at the barrier knows that we have the little Baron of Phillipsbourg with us, and has handled the two York six-pences you will give him, of course he 'll let us pass. So, don't you see, we can fix this little boy all right, and, better yet, can see King George's men go out and our troops come in, and make just a splendid day of it."

Dolly, fully alive to these glorious possibilities, clapped her hands delightedly.

"What a brain the boy has!" said young Livingston. "Keep on, my son," he said, patronizingly, "and you 'll make a great man yet."

"So I mean to be," said De Witt Clinton, cheerily, and then, heading the little group, he followed out the route he had proposed. Erelong the barriers were safely passed, Cousin Ned was two York sixpences out of pocket, and the young people stood within the British lines.

"And now, where may we find your grandfather, little one?" Cousin Ned inquired, as they halted on the Broad Way beneath one of the tall poplars that lined that old-time street.

The little Phillipse could not well reply. The noise and confusion that filled the city had well-nigh turned his head. For what with the departing English troops, the disconsolate loyalist refugees hurrying for transportation to distant English ports, and the zealous citizens who were making great preparations to welcome the incoming soldiers of the Congress, the streets of the little city were full of bustle and excitement. The boy said his grandfather might be at the fort; he might be at the King's Arms Tavern, near Stone Street; he might be—he *would* be—hunting for him.

So Master Clinton suggested: "Let's go down to Mr. Day's tavern here in Murray Street. He knows me, and, if he can, will find Colonel Phillipse for us." Down into Murray Street therefore they turned, and, near the road to Greenwich, saw the tavern,—a long, low-roofed house, gable end

to the street,—around which an excited crowd surged and shouted.

“Why, look there,” Master Clinton cried; “look there; and the king’s men not yet gone!” and, following the direction of his finger, they saw with surprise the stars and stripes, the flag of the new republic, floating from the pole before the tavern.

“Huzza!” they shouted with the rest, but the “little lord” said, somewhat contemptuously, “Why, ’t is the rebel flag—or so my grandfather calls it.”

“Rebel no longer, little one,” said Cousin Ned, “as even your good grandfather must now admit. But surely,” he added, anxiously, “Mr. Day will get himself in trouble by raising his flag before our troops come in.”

An angry shout now rose from the throng around the flag-staff, and as the fringe of small boys scattered and ran in haste, young Livingston caught one of them by the arm. “What’s the trouble, lad?” he asked.

“Let go!” said the boy, struggling to free himself. “You’d better scatter, too, or Cunningham will catch you. He’s ordered down Day’s flag, and says he’ll clear the crowd.”

They all knew who Cunningham was—the cruel and vindictive British provost-marshal; the starver of American prisoners and the terror of American children. “Come away, quick,” said Cousin Ned.

But, though they drew off at first, curiosity was too strong, and they were soon in the crowd again.

Cunningham, the marshal, stood at the foot of the flag-pole. "Come, you rebel cur," he said to Mr. Day, "I give you two minutes to haul down that rag—two minutes, d 'ye hear, or into the Provost you go. Your beggarly troops are not in possession here yet, and I 'll have no such striped rag as that flying in the faces of His Majesty's forces!"

"There it is, and there it shall stay," said Day, quietly but firmly.

Cunningham turned to his guard.

"Arrest that man," he ordered. "And as for this thing here, I 'll haul it down myself," and seizing the halyards, he began to lower the flag. The crowd broke out into fierce murmurs, uncertain what to do. But, in the midst of the tumult, the door of the tavern flew open, and forth sallied Mrs. Day, "fair, fat, and forty," armed with her trusty broom.

"Hands off that flag, you villain, and drop my husband!" she cried, and before the astonished Cunningham could realize the situation, the broom came down thwack! thwack! upon his powdered wig. Old men still lived, not thirty years ago, who were boys in that excited crowd, and remembered how the powder flew from the stiff white

wig and how, amidst jeers and laughter, the defeated provost-marshal withdrew from the unequal contest, and fled before the resistless sweep of Mrs. Day's all-conquering broom. And the flag did *not* come down.

From the vantage-ground of a projecting "stoop," our young friends had indulged in irreverent laughter, and the marshal's quick ears caught the sound.

Fuming with rage and seeking some one to vent his anger on, he rushed up the "stoop" and bade his guard drag down the culprits.

"What pestilent young rebels have we here?" he growled. "Who are you?" He started as they gave their names. "Livingston? Clinton? Duane?" he repeated. "Well, well—a rare lot this of the rebel brood! And who is yon young bantling in velvet and ruffles?"

"You must not stop us, sir," said the boy, facing the angry marshal. "I am the little lord of the manor, and my grandfather is Colonel Phillipse. Sir Guy Carleton is waiting for me."

"Well, well," exclaimed the surprised marshal; "here's a fine to-do! A Phillipse in this rebel lot! What does it mean? Have ye kidnapped the lad? Here may be some treachery. Bring them along!" and with as much importance as if he had captured a whole corps of Washington's dragoons, instead

of a few harmless children, the young prisoners were hurried off, followed by an indignant crowd. Dolly was considerably frightened, and dark visions of the stocks, the whipping-post, and the ducking-stool by the Collect pond rose before her eyes. But Cousin Ned whispered : " Don't be afraid, Dolly—'t will all be right " ; and Master Clinton even sought to argue with the marshal.

" There are no rebels now, sir," he said, " since your king has given up the fight. You yourselves are rebels, rather, if you restrain us of our freedom. I know your king's proclamation, word for word. It says : ' We do hereby strictly charge and command all our officers, both at sea and land, and all other our subjects whatsoever, to forbear all acts of hostility, either by sea or land, against the United States of America, their vassals or subjects, under the penalty of incurring our highest displeasure.' Wherefore, sir," concluded this wise young pleader, " if you keep us in unlawful custody, you do brave your king's displeasure."

" You impudent young rebel—" began Cunningham ; but the " little lord " interrupted him with : " You shall not take us to jail, sir. I will tell my grandfather, and he will make Sir Guy punish you." And upon this, the provost-marshal, whose wrath had somewhat cooled, began to fear that he might, perhaps, have exceeded his authority, and

erelong, with a sour look and a surly word, he set the young people free.

Sir Guy Carleton, K. C. B., commander-in-chief of all His Majesty's forces in the colonies, stood at the foot of the flag-staff on the northern bastion of Fort George. Before him filed the departing troops of his king, evacuating the pleasant little city they had occupied for over seven years. "There might be seen," says one of the old records, "the Hessian, with his towering, brass-fronted cap, mustache colored with the same blacking which colored his shoes, his hair plastered with tallow and flour, and reaching in whip-form to his waist. His uniform was a blue coat, yellow vest and breeches, and black gaiters. The Highlander, with his low checked bonnet, his tartan or plaid, short red coat, his kilt above his knees, and they exposed, his hose short and party-colored. There were also the grenadiers of Anspach, with towering yellow caps; the gaudy Waldeckers, with their cocked hats edged with yellow scallops; the German yägers, and the various corps of English in glittering and gallant pomp." The white-capped waves of the beautiful bay sparkled in the sunlight, while the whale-boats, barges, gigs, and launches sped over the water, bearing troops and refugees to the transports, or to the temporary camp on

Staten Island. The last act of the evacuation was almost completed. But Sir Guy Carleton looked troubled. His eye wandered from the departing troops at Whitehall slip to the gate at Bowling Green, and then across the parade to the Governor's gardens and the town beyond.

"Well, sir, what word from Colonel Phillipse?" he inquired, as an aid hurried to his side.

"He bids you go without him, General," the aid reported. "The boy is not yet found, but the Colonel says he will risk seizure rather than leave the lad behind."

"It cannot well be helped," said the British commander. "I will myself dispatch a line to General Washington, requesting due courtesy and safe conduct for Colonel Phillipse and his missing heir. But see—whom have we here?" he asked, as across the parade came a rumbling coach, while behind it a covered cariole came tearing through the gate-way. Ere the bastion on which the General stood was reached the cariole drew up with sudden stop. Angevine, the black body-servant, sprang to the horses' heads, and a very large man hatless, though richly dressed, descended hastily and flung open the door of the coach just as Mistress Dolly was preparing to descend, and as he helped her out he caught in his ample arms the little fellow who followed close at her heels.



“ HE OPENED THE COACH DOOR JUST AS MISTRESS DOLLY WAS PREPARING
TO DESCEND.”

“Good ; the lost is found !” exclaimed Sir Guy, who had been an interested spectator of the pantomime.

“All is well, General,” Colonel Phillipse cried, joyfully, as the commander came down from the bastion and welcomed the new-comers. “My little lord of the manor is found ; and, faith, his loss troubled me more than all the attainder and forfeiture the rebel Congress can crowd upon me.”

“But how got he here ?” Sir Guy asked.

“This fair little lady is both his rescuer and protector,” replied the grandfather.

“And who may you be, little mistress ?” asked the commander-in-chief.

Dolly made a neat little curtsy, for those were the days of good manners, and she was a proper little damsel. “I am Dolly Duane, your Excellency,” she said, “daughter of Mr. James Duane, of the Congress.”

“Duane !” exclaimed the Colonel ; “well, well, little one, I did not think a Phillipse would ever acknowledge himself debtor to a Duane, but now do I gladly do it. Bear my compliments to your father, sweet Mistress Dolly, and tell him that his old enemy, Phillipse, of Phillipsbourg, will never forget the kindly aid of his gentle little daughter, who has this day restored a lost lad to a sorrowing grandfather. And let me thus show my gratitude

for your love and service," and the very large man, stooping in all courtesy before the little girl, laid his hand in blessing on her head, and kissed her fair young face.

"A rare little maiden, truly," said gallant Sir Guy: "and though I have small cause to favor so hot an enemy of the king as is Mr. James Duane, I admire his dutiful little daughter; and thus would I, too, render her love and service," and the gleaming scarlet and gold-laced arms of the courtly old commander encircled fair Mistress Dolly, and a hearty kiss fell upon her blushing cheeks. But she was equal to the occasion. Raising herself on tiptoe, she dropped a dainty kiss upon the General's smiling face, and said, "Let this, sir, be America's good-bye kiss to your Excellency."

"A right royal salute," said Sir Guy. "Mr. De Lancy, bid the band-master give us the farewell march"; and, to the strains of appropriate music, the commander-in-chief and his staff passed down to the boats, and the little lord of Phillipse Manor waved Mistress Dolly a last farewell.

Then the red cross of St. George, England's royal flag, came fluttering down from its high staff on the north bastion, and the last of the rear-guard wheeled toward the slip. But Cunningham, the provost-marshal, still angered by the thought of his discomfiture at Day's tavern, declared roundly that

no rebel flag should go up that staff in sight of King George's men. "Come, lively now, you blue jackets," he shouted, turning to some of the sailors from the fleet. "Unreeve the halyards, quick; slush down the pole; knock off the stepping-cleats! Then let them run their rag up if they can." His orders were quickly obeyed. The halyards were speedily cut, the stepping-cleats knocked from the staff, and the tall pole covered with grease, so that none might climb it. And with this final act of unsoldierly discourtesy, the memory of which has lived through a hundred busy years, the provost-marshal left the now liberated city.

Even Sir Guy's gallant kiss could not rid Dolly of her fear of Cunningham's frown; but as she scampered off she heard his final order, and, hot with indignation, told the news to Cousin Ned and Master Clinton, who were in waiting for her on the Bowling Green. The younger lad was for stirring up the people to instant action, but just then they heard the roll of drums, and, standing near the ruins of King George's statue, watched the advance-guard of the Continental troops as they filed in to take possession of the fort. Beneath the high gate-way and straight toward the north bastion marched the detachment—a troop of horse, a regiment of infantry, and a company of artillery. The batteries, the parapets, and the ramparts were thronged with

cheering people, and Colonel Jackson, halting before the flag-staff, ordered up the stars and stripes.

"The halyards are cut, Colonel," reported the color-sergeant; "the cleats are gone, and the pole is slushed."

"A mean trick, indeed," exclaimed the indignant Colonel. "Hallo there, lads, will you be outwitted by such a scurvy trick? Look where they wait in their boats to give us the laugh. Will you let tainted Tories and buttermilk Whigs thus shame us? A gold jacobus to him who will climb the staff and reeve the halyards for the stars and stripes."

Dolly's quick ear caught the ringing words. "Oh, Cousin Ned," she cried; "I saw Jacky Van Arsdale on the Bowling Green. Don't you remember how he climbed the greased pole at Clermont, in the May merrying?" and with that she sped across the parade and through the gate-way, returning soon with a stout sailor-boy of fifteen. "Now, tell the Colonel you'll try it, Jacky."

"Go it, Jack!" shouted Cousin Ned. "I'll make the gold jacobus two if you but reeve the halyards."

"I want no money for the job, Master Livingston," said the sailor-lad. "I'll do it if I can for Mistress Dolly's sake."

Jack was an expert climber, but if any of my boy

readers think it a simple thing to "shin up" a greased pole, just let them try it once—and fail.

Jack Van Arsdale tried it manfully once, twice, thrice, and each time came slipping down covered with slush and shame. And all the watchers in the boats off-shore joined in a chorus of laughs and jeers. Jack shook his fist at them angrily. "I 'll fix' em yet," he said. "If ye 'll but saw me up some cleats, and give me hammer and nails, I 'll run that flag to the top in spite of all the Tories from 'Sopus to Sandy Hook!"

Ready hands and willing feet came to the assistance of the plucky lad. Some ran swiftly to Mr. Goelet's, "the iron-monger's" in Hanover Square, and brought quickly back "a hand-saw, hatchet, hammer, gimlets, and nails"; others drew a long board to the bastion, and while one sawed the board into lengths, another split the strips into cleats, others bored the nail-holes, and soon young Jack had material enough.

Then, tying the halyards around his waist, and filling his jacket-pockets with cleats and nails, he worked his way up the flag-pole, nailing and climbing as he went. And now he reaches the top, now the halyards are reeved, and as the beautiful flag goes fluttering up the staff a mighty cheer is heard, and a round of thirteen guns salutes the stars and stripes and the brave sailor-boy who did the gallant deed!

From the city streets came the roll and rumble of distant drums, and Dolly and her two companions, following the excited crowd, hastened across Hanover Square, and from an excellent outlook in the Fly Market watched the whole grand procession as it wound down Queen (now Pearl) Street, making its triumphal entry into the welcoming city. First came a corps of dragoons, then followed the advance-guard of light infantry and a corps of artillery, then more light infantry, a battalion of Massachusetts troops, and the rear-guard. As the veterans, with their soiled and faded uniforms, filed past, Dolly could not help contrasting them with the brilliant appearance of the British troops she had seen in the fort. "Their clothes *do* look worn and rusty," she said. "But then," she added, with beaming eyes, "they are *our* soldiers, and that is every thing."

And now she hears "a great hozaing all down the Fly," as one record queerly puts it, and as the shouts increase, she sees a throng of horsemen, where, escorted by Captain Delavan's "West Chester Light Horse," ride the heroes of that happy hour, General George Washington and Governor George Clinton. Dolly added her clear little treble to the loud huzzas as the famous commander-in-chief rode down the echoing street. Behind their excellencies came other officials, dignitaries, army officers, and

files of citizens, on horseback and afoot, many of the latter returning to dismantled and ruined homes after nearly eight years of exile.

But Dolly did not wait to see the whole procession. She had spied her father in the line of mounted citizens, and flying across Queen Street, and around by Golden Hill (near Maiden Lane), where the first blood of the Revolution was spilled, she hurried down the Broad Way, so as to reach Mr. Cape's tavern before their excellencies arrived.

Soon she was in her father's arms relating her adventures, and as she received his chidings for mingling in such "unseemly crowds," and his praise for her championship and protection of the little Phillipse, a kindly hand was laid upon her fair young head, and a voice whose tones she could never forget said: "So may our children be angels of peace, Mr. Duane. Few have suffered more, or deserved better from their country, sir, than you; but the possession of so rare a little daughter is a fairer recompense than aught your country can bestow. Heaven has given me no children, sir; but had I thus been blessed, I could have wished for no gentler or truer-hearted little daughter than this maid of yours." And with the stately courtesy that marked the time, General Washington bent down and kissed little Dolly as

she sat on her father's knee. Touched by his kindly words, Dolly forgot all her awe of the great man. Flinging two winsome arms about his neck, she kissed him in return, and said, softly: "If Mr. Duane were not my father, sir, I would rather it should be you than any one else."



GENERAL WASHINGTON.

(From Houdon's bust.)

In all her after-life, though she retained pleasant memories of Sir Guy Carleton, and thought him a grand and gallant gentleman, Dolly Duane held still more firmly to her reverence and affection for General Washington, whom she described as "looking more grand and noble than any human being she had ever seen."

Next to General Washington, I think she held the fire-works that were set off in the Bowling Green in honor of the Peace to have been the grandest thing she had ever seen. The rockets, and the wheels, and the tourbillions, and the batteries, and the stars were all so wonderful to her, that General Knox said Dolly's "ohs" and "ahs" were "as good as a play"; and staid Master Clinton and jolly Cousin Ned threatened to send to the Ferry stairs for an anchor to hold her down. Both these young gentlemen grew to be famous Americans in after years, and witnessed many anniversaries of this glorious Evacuation-Day. But they never enjoyed any of them quite as much as they did the exciting original, nor could they ever forget, amidst all the throng of memories, how sweet Mistress Dolly Duane championed and protected the lost "little lord of the manor," and won the distinguished honor of being kissed by both the commanders-in-chief on the same eventful day.



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